

IN THESE TIMES

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BLACK ANTI-SEMITISM
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In the late '60s, black intellectuals like Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) turned to vicious anti-Semitism.

The anti-Semitic current among blacks

By Salim Muwakkil

Jesse Jackson's cavalier use of words like "Hymie" and "Hymietown" while bantering with black reporters illustrates a troubling truth: anti-Jewish sentiments are so widespread in the black community that someone as socially perceptive as Jackson can assume reporters talking "black talk" with him share such sentiments. It's doubtful candidate Jackson would have used similarly disparaging language about any other ethnic group. The spectacle of such a passionate apostle of social justice openly expressing biases would be too brazen a display of hypocrisy to remain off the record for long. But Jackson apparently never considered whether it was safe to express a prejudiced view of Jews.

In some instances this anti-Jewish bias manifests as something close to classic anti-Semitism, but it most often appears as a xenophobic feature of black urban culture. Since the histories of blacks and Jews merged in this country's cities, various stereotypes and myths were generated by both groups about each other.

I can only guess what African-American stereotypes were cooked up by Jewish-American culture, but for many blacks in northern cities the word "Jew" was first known as a verb, e.g., "I'm going to Jew that guy down to a lower price." Almost every large northern city has its "Jewtown" where blacks go to barter and

In Cruse's estimation, Jews' passion for Israel has forfeited all Jews' right to certain "subjective responses." He made no exceptions for Jews who are avidly anti-Zionist. But even if every single Jewish-American was a dedicated Zionist, Cruse's advice to "Negro intellectuals" was bigoted and simplistic. Unfortunately, many took his advice.

Cruse apparently fancied himself an unemotional practitioner of "objective criticism," yet he found nothing illogical about maligning an entire ethnic group on the basis of a socio-political schema he had adopted. For him, any black intellectual worth his salt was a nationalist and, since he deemed Zionism inherently opposed to black nationalism, all black intellectuals should be anti-Zionist. Some black intellectuals seem to have taken his argument to such an extreme that they reason that all black intellectuals should also be anti-Semitic.

That *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* was an influential book during the heady days of the black power movement (1968-1974) should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the reigning notions of that era. "Anti-Semitism grew in the black liberation movement as we moved further into cultural nationalism," wrote Amiri Baraka (a.k.a. LeRoi Jones) in a contrite 1980 article for the *Village Voice*. Baraka himself was one of the prime movers of black cultural nationalism, a branch of the movement that advised a rejection of Euro-American culture and an adoption of certain African folkways and affectations. "For instance," Baraka wrote, "as whites were put out of such organizations as SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee] and CORE [Congress of Racial Equality], the 'Jewish influence' over these organizations was cited as one reason why." But for Baraka, who penned some of the most viciously anti-Jewish poems published in that era, the objection to Jewish influence wasn't merely political. He had fallen in with a group of Muslims who had constructed a "metaphysical premise that Jews had stolen black secrets and then said that Hitler disliked Jews because he could smell the contact with black on them..."

While cultural nationalists of Baraka's stripe (e.g., Ron Karenga, Haki Madhubuti, Jitu Weusi) were pushing their vision of Jews as malicious hoarders of special metaphysical knowledge, the so-called Revolutionary Nationalists of the Black Panther Party and assorted imitators cast Jews as manipulators of culture and capitalist lackies. Many of these advocates of "ghetto Marxism" would insist they were only condemning Zionism and not all Jews—a legitimate argument—but they were never convincing.

They distributed copies of *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* throughout many black communities and made the pamphlet mandatory reading for anyone seeking membership in the group. When asked how they could trust the authenticity of a document long discredited as a fraud, Panther members were taught to point to the "Jewish names" of various reporters, editors, movie producers, university professors, television executives and publishers and explain how it was all laid out in the *Protocols*.

The multitude of bitterly contentious, black Islamic sects could agree on at least one thing: there was something especially evil about Jews. And even in the civil rights movement—dominated as it is by Christian clergymen—there have been occasional expressions of theological displeasure with inordinate Jewish influence. But this is rare. Generally, the civil rights movement has been the least anti-Semitic segment of the black activist community. But, as Baraka indicated in his *Voice* article, cultural revolt against "Jewish control" shot many young civil righters out of the movement's mainstream and into groups like SNCC and the Student Organization of Black Unity (SOBU).

The recent resurgence of the black movement, symbolized by Jesse Jackson's audacious run for the presidency (and his alliance with the black nationalist wing of the movement) has provoked attendant concerns about a resurgent anti-Semitism. Those concerns are justified, and not just because of the bombast of someone like Louis Farrakhan. The workings of a more insidious kind of bigotry may pose greater worry. It often goes unacknow-

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bargain for price breaks. That Jews are shrewd, money-grubbing wheeler-dealers remains an enduring stereotype in most urban ghettos, but while resentment of Jewish merchants occasionally boils over into a demonstration or boycott, by and large such bias represents nothing irrevocable. In fact, it's already changing. Other ethnic groups are assuming the role that Jews have historically played in the northern cities and it may not be long before phrases like "I'm going to A-rab you down to a lower price" become common in urban neighborhoods.

The very small number of Southern blacks who hold anti-Jewish views are usually those motivated by that venerable accusation—still popular in some Christian fundamentalist circles—that Jews killed Jesus. This interpretation is held by a decreasing number of fundamentalist groups, though, and never was very strong among black congregations.

But there are blacks—particularly intellectuals and black movement activists—with a disturbing affinity for views that resemble classic anti-Semitism. In his 1967 book, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, Harold Cruse argued that the establishment of Israel in 1948 forever altered African-Americans' relationship with American Jews, "for the emergence of Israel as a world-power-in-miniscale meant that the Jewish question in America was no longer purely a domestic minority problem growing out of the old immigrant status tradition. A great proportion of American Jews began to function in America as an organic part of a distant nation state."

Cruse concluded that relationships between the two groups have become "colored by the incipient clash of two ideologies, Black Nationalism and Zionism," and so, "...it is no longer possible for Negro intellectuals to deal with the Jewish question in America purely on a basis of brotherhood, compassion, morality (emphasis added) and other subjective responses which rule out objective criticism and positive appraisal."



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IN THESE TIMES

INTRODUCING DETROIT'S
CAR OF THE YEAR —
THE QUOTA!



IT'S BIG, THE PROFIT'S BIG
AND THE PRICE TAG IS
BIGGER YET



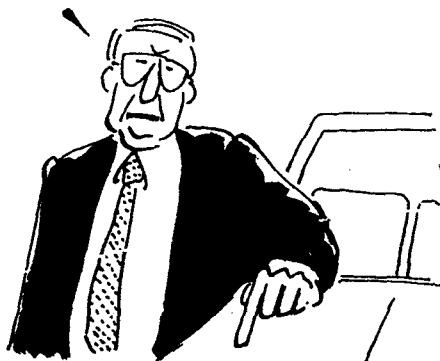
BUT THAT'S NOT ALL — BACKED
BY OUR SPECIAL PROTECTIONISM
PLAN...



IT DELIVERS EXECUTIVE
BONUSES LIKE YOU'VE
NEVER SEEN



THE QUOTA — NO IMPORT
CAN COMPETE WITH IT...



'CAUSE WE DON'T
LET 'EM



Los Angeles Times Syndicate

To each according to his greed

By David Moberg

REAGANOMICS WORKS. JUST ask William S. Anderson, chairman of NCR Corp., makers of office equipment. Last year he won the coveted title of highest-paid executive in the U.S. with his \$1.075 million in salary and bonus plus \$12.154 million in "long-term compensation" (exercising options to buy stock at below-market rates). His salary alone jumped 58 percent from the previous year.

Anderson may have stood out, but to get in *Business Week's* Top 25 a corporate executive had to make more than \$2.3 million in total compensation. When you consider that only five executives made more than \$1 million six years ago (46 did last year), that's impressive progress of a sort. On the average, top executives' annual pay for 1983—not counting the stock options—increased 13.1 percent in the *Business Week* annual survey. That was a year, it is worth remembering, when new union contracts brought an average of 2.6 percent increase in pay and non-union workers' earnings rose an average of 5.8 percent.

A small tempest has greeted these announcements, with criticisms coming not only from expected sources—labor, liberals and the left—but also from conservative politicians, business consultants and some Reagan administration officials. The biggest flap involved the troubled auto industry. Three Ford executives made the Top 25, with chairman Philip Caldwell ranking second with total compensation of \$7.292 million. Poor GM chairman Roger Smith didn't make the elite 25, but his salary did increase by 171 percent to \$1.49 million (no stock options this year), enough to buy a nice bottle and Kleenex to wipe away the tears.

Are objections to these hefty salaries (unlike the pursuit of them) simply manifestations of the greed and envy that Reagan says his opponents are promoting with their complaints that his policies have bled the poor to feed the rich? Caldwell says bonuses to top managers add only \$4 to the cost of a new Ford. Whatever one may feel about shelling out the extra \$4 to reward Mr. Caldwell and friends, the pay of all the million-dollar executives is indeed a tiny part of the gross national product (GNP). But there are other related costs.

"It's easy to point a finger at the top guy—and we should—but management

salary at the top level is the tip of the iceberg," argues Les Leopold, vice-president of the Institute for Labor Education and Research. From a narrow economic perspective, high executive salaries are mainly symptoms of deeper problems. But in terms of American politics and culture—which ultimately affect economic performance—they warrant criticism in their own right.

David Gordon, professor of economics at the New School for Social Research and co-author of *Beyond the Wasteland*, sees the huge salaries as part of a larger problem of managerial waste in a "top-heavy bureaucracy of the U.S. economy. The relative intensity of corporate bureaucracy is double that in Japan and three times that in Germany and Sweden," he said. "In general, U.S. executive salaries tend to be higher than elsewhere. If you care about efficiency, productivity and how the economy functions, you have to object to management excesses.

"It's wrong to focus simply on the top manager's high salary," Gordon continued. "You need to look at the full segment of management and administration. One of the reasons his salary needs to be high is there are so many managers below him on the hierarchy, and there's the need to maintain the artificial incentive system. The relevant fact is not how much Caldwell's salary is per car, but how much the total paid for managerial salaries is." Gordon calculated that around 18 percent of all employees, representing 26 percent of the GNP, are involved in some supervisory or managerial role.

Why did the U.S. corporate bureau-

David Gordon sees the huge salaries as part of a larger problem of managerial waste in a "top-heavy" bureaucracy of the U.S. economy.

cracy and its salaries grow so much larger in the U.S., especially from the late '40s to early '60s? Gordon offers two speculations. At that time U.S. corporations were assuming global imperial powers. Also, "U.S. corporations adopted, and U.S. labor acquiesced in, a management style structured around the initiative of management and reduced initiatives of labor." Sweden, with a strong labor movement and the Social Democratic Party, relies heavily on labor initiative at all levels, and managers make up only 2 percent of its workforce, compared with 11 percent in the U.S.

Greater cooperation.

There is an emerging body of opinion stretching in various forms across the political spectrum in this country that the U.S. economy would run more efficiently and competitively if there were greater cooperation. On the right that translates into workers cooperating with management goals, on the left just the opposite. Advocates of some new social contract consequently are upset that ostentatious management salaries, especially at a time when unemployment is high and so many workers have had their belts tightened, undermines a willingness to "pull together" and heightens class antagonisms.

Management consultant Peter Drucker, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, warned that limitations may have to be imposed on management salaries if there was no self-restraint. He lamented that "team effort" had been undermined, citing a case of a major defense contractor that lost 20 senior engineers and engineering managers who were angry that they had been limited to 3 percent raises when the top managers took 25 to 30 percent increases.

Drucker did not acknowledge the problem of bloated managerial bureaucracy that Gordon describes. Only roughly 1,000 executives at the top of the biggest corporations are able to indulge in super-salaries and stock-option bonanzas. "But its members are highly visible," he wrote. "And they offend the sense of justice of many, indeed the majority of management people themselves. They are seen as the embodiment of the ethics and values of American business and management."

True enough, they are. Those are also the values of the Reagan administration, which has attempted to legitimate unlimited greed by the rich and the redistribution of wealth and income from bottom to top. Such ruthlessness may be part of the basic logic of capitalism. But in many

other capitalist countries such voraciousness is tempered by political restraints (strong unions and labor or socialist political parties) by tax and other government policies and by cultural traditions (such as a concern for national interest or a greater respect for public service). Out-sized executive salaries in the U.S. may simply make clearer how and for whom the U.S. economy is run—if it doesn't distract from the bigger issues.

"[These high salaries] don't affect me very much," said Edward S. Herman, professor of finance at Wharton School and author of *Corporate Control, Corporate Power*. "I almost like to see them in a cynical sense. They're just another manifestation of the shift of power and wealth reflected in Reaganomics. They're insignificant by comparison with a lot of the tax breaks, shelters, depreciation and leveraged buy-outs. Those are much bigger money than the salaries. I take the salaries as a secondary manifestation of Reagan's class war. They're more conspicuous than the larger, more sinister changes."

Over the years 1983-85, the average household with income less than \$10,000 will lose \$1,100 as a result of Reagan's tax and benefit changes during his first two years in office and an average household earning \$80,000 or more will gain \$24,410, according to a recent study for the Senate Budget Committee. Similarly, two researchers for the Urban Institute concluded that while disposable real income for an average family in the top fifth dropped .5 percent between 1979 and 1984, the losses increased with each step down the ladder, amounting to 9.4 percent for those in the bottom fifth. But each of these studies understates the much vaster gains scored by the very rich, including major property owners as well as top executives.

Professional managers.

Some critics maintain that the high executive salaries reflect the takeover of big corporations by professional management. This view is reflected in a new report from the Democracy Project by Mark Green and Bonnie Tenneriello. They charge that managers have sufficient control over the naming of directors, selection of pay consultants and supply of information to compensation committees of their boards of directors that they can essentially set their own salaries. This expanding motherlode for executives includes not only the salary, bonuses and stock options, but also lavish expenses and company-supplied perquisites, severance pay and the increasingly common "golden parachutes" that deliver enormous sums—often millions of dollars—to executives who lose out if the corporation is taken over.

In *Corporate Control, Corporate Power*, Herman—who argues that the "managerial revolution" did not change corporate orientation to maximizing profit—shows how ingrown the circles of power are in a big corporation. Theoretically 56 percent of the directors of the 100 largest industrial companies in 1975 were "outsiders," that is not part of management itself. But when the social, business and cultural ties of those outsiders to management were examined, Herman concluded that only about 6.6 percent could be regarded as "outside." Green and Tenneriello believe that stockholders—not to mention workers—are being ripped off by this managerial elite.

"There is clearly an increased degree of managerial control over their own compensation," argued Robert Lekachman, professor of economics at City University of New York. "If you and I controlled our compensation, we'd probably make more pay, too. Managers are increasingly in business for themselves: they jump from company to company, arranging golden parachutes and platinum parachutes. You've got a set of free-lance managers with little loyalty to any organization and only loyalty to their net worth. It seems derisive to seek the kind of participation pursued in Scandinavia

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IN SHORT

Holed up in Guatemala

The Coca-Cola plant occupation in Guatemala (see *In These Times*, April 11) is still at a stalemate: as the workers begin their fourth month protecting equipment in the abandoned plant, Coca-Cola International says it's looking for another franchiser. The International Union of Food and Allied Workers (IUF) wrung that promise from Coke at a mid-April shareholders meeting in Houston, and union leaders see it as the first sign that Coke will admit any responsibility in the plant's abrupt shutdown. The unionists, however, have not eased up in their attempt to inform union members and the public about Coke's negligence and are still studying the complex ins and outs of an international boycott.

A March delegation of leaders from three international unions found a calm daily routine at the plant. Days are filled with reports of responses to the shutdown by the Guatemalan government, International Coke and labor unions worldwide. Visiting Guatemalans from other unions stop to offer food and support to the plant's STEGAC union for its strong stand in a country where union membership is often considered "suicidal." Representatives from labor and relief organizations bring money to disperse among the workers for emergencies at home. So far, the only threat of a union break-up came when the franchisers took out an ad in the major newspaper, *Prensa Libre*, offering a year's severance pay (\$4,000-6,000 U.S.) for workers willing to give up the occupation. The IUF delegation reports that by last month only 45 of the 460 workers had picked up their checks, and 34 of those were administrative workers. Messages protesting the shutdown can be sent to Coca-Cola, P.O. Drawer 1734, Atlanta, GA 30301. Donations for STEGAC members can be sent to IUF, c/o Sally Cornwale, Room 408, 815 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20006. Religious groups who hold stock in Coke should contact the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, c/o Carol Samplatsky-Jarman, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115.

Bingo bust

Bingo, once a staple of poorly lit church basements, is now a major money-maker and sometimes cause of dissention between American Indian tribes and carpetbagger entrepreneurs, reports the May 11 issue of the *National Catholic Reporter*. More than 60 of the nation's 167 tribes based on reservations are taking advantage of the "trust" relationship they have with the U.S. government that allows them to ignore state laws that put a ceiling on bingo pay-offs. The resultant high stakes—\$250,000 is not uncommon—draw outsiders to the reservations to try their luck.

Who gets the spoils? What was first viewed by many tribes as a way of becoming economically self-sufficient has, at least for several southern California tribes, led to another form of dependency. In 1982 an Indianapolis businessman fronted \$2 million for a bingo casino on California's Morongo reservation. The Indians received their allotted profit from the first few months take—\$125,000—but since then have received none of the additional 5 percent profit they had been promised. The question of how to distribute the money has caused added tensions among the Morongo. Some leaders called for investing in long-term communal businesses, but the tribe voted to split the profits on a per capita basis. Tribal council member Mayann Andreas explains that this take-the-money-and-run attitude comes from the fear that Congress can abolish the reservations at any moment.

What the Indians *don't* want—and Arizona congressmembers want to impose on them—are government regulations to curb gambling on the reservations. Fearing other restrictions on tribal sovereignty, they'd rather find a way to do away with the bingo middleman and invest profits back into the community.

Pershing plowshares

Believing that disarmament can only come from the grassroots, eight religious activists entered Martin Marietta's Orlando, Fla., bomb plant on Easter morning, heeding the biblical injunction to "beat swords into plowshares," reports Alex Chairns. Following in the footsteps of other "Plowshare" groups, the protesters damaged a missile launcher, hammered on Pershing II missile components and threw vials of blood on weapons parts. Charged with three state felonies and indicted for federal conspiracy and depredation of private property, the Pershing Plowshares now await trial under \$100,000 bonds. The group targeted the Pershing II as an "act of solidarity with the Western European people," according to Patrick O'Neill, one of those charged. Ironically, their trial date is August 6—Hiroshima Day.

Soviet "nyet" gets applause

The Ban the Soviets Coalition are ecstatic about the recent USSR Olympic boycott. The Orange County, Calif., group claims some credit for the drop-out due to their high-pressured opposition to the Soviet visit. However, the coalition also expended a lot of wasted energy putting together an extensive campaign of defection information—billboards, air banners and a 24-hour "defection hotline" in six languages—that the Communist no-shows won't have a chance to use.

—Beth Maschinot



On May 6, St. Theresa Catholic Church in San Francisco became the first church in the city to join the nationwide sanctuary movement. The parishioners in the working-class neighborhood voted to "adopt" the Salvadoran family—Monica (above) and her two children Valeria and Alejandra—to challenge the Immigration and Naturalization Service policy toward Central American refugees. Said Pastor Peter Sammon during the sanctuary mass: "It is the state and the INS acting illegally, not this community."

Agent Orange victims win a "vindication"



A trust fund will be set up to compensate vets and their families.

NEW YORK—On May 7—the day it was supposed to go to trial—a tentative settlement was reached in the massive Agent Orange class action suit (see *ITT*, April 11). The seven chemical companies that manufactured Agent Orange agreed to contribute \$180 million plus interest to a trust fund created to compensate the veterans and their families. Lawyers for the veterans say that in total the chemical companies will pay out close to \$250 million, the largest settlement for a personal injury lawsuit in the history of American jurisprudence.

One of the veterans' lawyers said it would be at least a year and a half to two years before any of the vets see some money.

"The American judicial system has seen its finest hour," said Victor Yannacone, the Long Island lawyer who filed the Agent Orange class action in 1979. "The system did work for the veterans and, regardless of the resources and political power of these soulless, stateless, multinational chemical companies, the veterans did see their day in court. The veterans have been vindicated."

The settlement allows the chemical companies to deny liability for the veterans' medical problems. A press release issued by the Dow Chemical company the day the settlement was announced declares that the settlement is a "compassionate, expedient and productive means of meeting the needs of the people involved."

Dow says the settlement does not establish that Agent Orange caused the veterans' medical problems. The company says it will not have an adverse impact on its financial position. Indeed, news of the settlement boosted Dow's stock on Wall Street.

Steven Bortis

1984 Richard Gordon

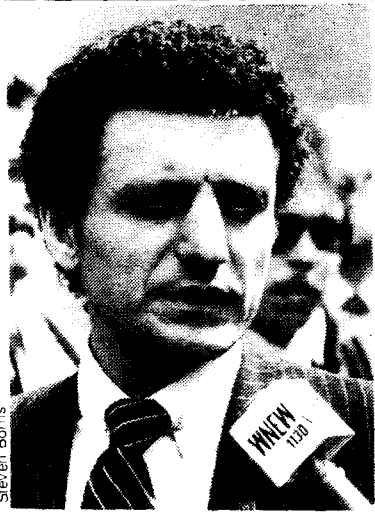
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The settlement allows the makers of Agent Orange to escape potentially huge punitive damages and a precedent-setting jury verdict that dioxin causes cancer and birth defects in humans. Dow conceded it was not looking forward to having the case decided by a jury.

But Frank McCarthy, head of the Stamford, Conn.-based Vietnam Veterans Agent Orange Victims, called the settlement an admission of guilt. "They're so afraid to go to trial and let a jury of our peers see the evidence in this case," he said.

The Agent Orange settlement in effect creates a trust fund to compensate the vets and their families. In an unprecedented move, a percentage of the trust fund will be earmarked for children who may be born with birth defects in the future and veterans who have not yet manifested the symptoms of cancer and other serious diseases. The vets will have to file claims with the trust fund, but their claims will be examined by a "friendly medical panel" that, unlike the Veterans Administration, accepts the proposition that dioxin causes cancer, birth defects and other systemic injury. The trust fund will also be devoted to research into the effects of dioxin poisoning.

While many veterans see the settlement as a tremendous moral victory, others feel the amount is grossly inadequate. As soon as the settlement was announced, they were busy calculating their share and soon realized that the settlement offer



Frank McCarthy, spokesperson for the vets.

might not provide more than \$10,000 per veteran.

If Judge Weinstein decides the settlement isn't fair, he could order the trial to be held. But first, he'll hold a hearing at which veterans can voice their criticisms of the deal. Several veterans groups are planning to attend and challenge the settlement.

Meanwhile, the chemical companies have a suit pending against the government for misusing Agent Orange in Vietnam. The settlement specifically allows that suit to proceed. Some lawyers say they will now file claims against the Defense Department on behalf of the veterans' wives and children. The veterans themselves are prohibited from suing the government for injuries sustained during war-time.

—Jon Kalish

Korea: U.S. readies nuclear battlefield?

ALBANY, N.Y.—While antinuclear activists are protesting the introduction of nuclear missiles in Europe, the Reagan administration is quietly moving to up the nuclear weapons ante in Northeast Asia. In the next few months, ships of the U.S. Seventh Fleet will be fitted with Tomahawk cruise missiles that can carry 200 kiloton warheads, according to William Arkin of the Institute for Policy Studies. When these ships dock in South Korea, the missiles (with a range of 1,500 miles) will be able to reach the strategic Soviet military base at Vladivostok.

In addition to these sea-based missiles, *Aviation Week and Space Technology* reported last year that the Defense Nuclear Agency is studying the possibility of placing ground-launched cruise missiles in South Korea.

There are now 248 U.S. nuclear weapons based in South Korea, according to the Pentagon. Most of these are nuclear bombs that can be dropped from planes or fired from howitzers. However, there are also 21 nuclear land mines along the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea—their detonation planned to create "radiation barriers" between the two enemy countries.

Joyce Overton, staff of the Chicago-based Church Committee for Human Rights in Asia, points out that "South Korea already has military forces at least as strong as North Korea's. The only purpose for the nuclear

weapons seems to be to increase the U.S.'s overwhelming firepower against the Soviets." Overton added that "because of racist feelings so prevalent in our society, I'm afraid our military might be more willing to use Korea as a nuclear battleground than it would Germany."

Koreans have already experienced the horrors of nuclear destruction. There were 100,000 Koreans in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, working as forced laborers, when the first bombs were dropped by the U.S. in 1945. Koreans made up more than one fourth of the casualties.

Despite government repression that can land a critic of military policies in jail, there is a growing tide of opposition to U.S. nuclear weapons in South Korea. In October 1983 a declaration issued by the Korean National Council of Churches urged the withdrawal of all nuclear weapons on and around the Korean peninsula.

U.S. peace groups and other organizations are encouraged to endorse the following resolution for a nuclear-free Korea: "Be it resolved that the U.S. withdraw its nuclear weapons from South Korea—the only nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula—and work diplomatically to create a permanent nuclear-free zone on the Korean peninsula." The endorsements should be sent to: Committee for a New Korea Policy, 221 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12206.

—Maud and David Easter

Briefing: FCC eyes Fairness Doctrine

They don't call FCC Chairman Mark Fowler "the James Watt of the airwaves" for nothing. So far he's been true to his early claims to "take deregulation to the limits of the law" in communications. Now, he may be going one step further.

On April 11, the FCC initiated an inquiry into the Fairness Doctrine, which says that broadcasters have to "operate in the public interest and to afford reasonable opportunity for the discussion of conflicting views on issues of public importance." The Doctrine has made it possible for citizen groups to buck everything from gaybaiting to pro-nuclear ads on the airwaves.

This is hardly the first time the Fairness Doctrine has been challenged. Back in 1974, an FCC order triggered four years of debate and court action, which ended up affirming the Doctrine's legitimacy. But ever since Fowler took over the Reagan-era FCC, he has personally crusaded against it. Now in Congress Sen. Bob Packwood (R-OR), head of the Senate committee dealing with communications, is proposing a bill sweetly called the "Freedom of Expression Act" that would wipe the Fairness Doctrine off the books.

This inquiry goes further and deeper than before at the FCC. It challenges the Doctrine at its base—asking if it is constitutional, if the FCC can abolish it without going through Congress

and if it should do so. In the words of Commissioner Henry Rivera, who approved the inquiry notice "with strong, strong reservations," this is "a frontal assault on the public trustee concept of broadcast regulation." That means that the inquiry itself challenges the logic behind the 1934 Communications Act: that broadcasters must consider the public interest because the public, through the federal government, gives them monopolies over a scarce resource—the broadcast spectrum.

Just as shocking, the inquiry openly takes sides, saying that the Commission will put forward the strongest possible case against the Fairness Doctrine. This puts the burden of proof—for something the FCC is legally required to defend—on "the public."

Some people are very happy at this news—especially broadcasters and newspapers, many of which either have or envision broadcast interests. Some people have reservations—including FCC members known to hate the Doctrine. Commissioner James Quello said, "I don't know if it's our job to look for loopholes in congressional directives."

And others are simply appalled. In Congress, Rep. John Dingell (D-MI), who chairs the House committee on communications, says the Doctrine simply "is not subject to negotiation. If the Commission is looking closely at the Fairness Doctrine," he says, "I'm looking closely at the Commission."

Plenty of people use the Fairness Doctrine. The FCC clocks in some 10,000 inquiries a year at the minimum, although it only follows up on less than 1 percent. (Typically the complainant doesn't furnish enough information for the FCC to act.)

But the FCC's numbers are the least of the story. The real clout of the Doctrine is in negotiations between citizen groups and local stations, where the FCC never gets involved.

For instance, Scott Denman of the Safe Energy Communications Council, which helps local groups respond to corporate pro-nuclear campaigns, says the Doctrine helped get some \$250,000 worth of response time on TV and radio in the last 18 months—small change compared to the nuclear industry's \$35 million ad budget this year, but better than silence.

At the public employee union AFSCME, communications director Phil Sparks cites another example. In a 1982 strike in San Jose, Calif., news media widely reported the mayor's view of the strike but declined to interview AFSCME's lawyer. Sparks raised the Fairness Doctrine in discussion with local TV news managers, and they ended up using interview material with AFSCME's lawyer (made available on the union's satellite hookup) on that evening's news.

Most observers agree that the FCC cannot legally get away with repealing the Fairness Doctrine. Many others think no one—FCC or Congress—will repeal it in 1984. "Just think a minute," says on congressional staffer. "Can Reagan really abolish fairness in an election year?"

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A version of this article first appeared in the *Village Voice*.



IN THE NATION

LABOR

Religious care home invokes church-state split to halt union

By Drew Mendelson

KANSAS CITY, KN

AN ISSUE THAT BEGAN AS A labor dispute at a small Catholic nursing home here has received international attention and has raised the constitutional issue of union organizing rights at church-run health care institutions.

The most recent development came March 19 when two members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 96 of Kansas City traveled to Rome in a futile attempt to have Pope John Paul II intercede in the dispute, which has now dragged on for two years. The women were denied an audience with the Pope and were also rebuffed in their request to meet with papal staff to explain the situation in Kansas City.

Ultimately, they were able to contact the union that represents workers at the Vatican. One official agreed to write an article to be printed in the union's newspaper, which, he assured them, the Pope reads regularly. The union also promised to bring up the issue at its next executive board meeting.

What is the issue that galvanized these Kansas City union members so much that

they sought papal help in resolving it? And what did they hope the Pope could do?

The story revolves around St. Joseph Home operated by the Catholic Archdiocese of Kansas City. On May 27, 1982, the 125 employees of the home voted nearly unanimously to have Local 96 as their bargaining representative. Over the objections of the archdiocese and the home's management, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) certified the election and directed the home to begin negotiating a contract with Local 96. The management refused, claiming that in ordering the negotiations the NLRB was violating First Amendment guarantees of separation of church and state.

In December of that year the general counsel of the NLRB ruled that St. Joseph Home had no legal or constitutional ground for refusing to negotiate. General Counsel William Lubbers observed that the home was stalling in hopes of forcing a court test. He asked the labor board to issue a summary judgment directing negotiations. The judgment was issued and the home still refused. Subsequently, the NLRB issued an enforcement order and Lubbers filed suit in the U.S. 10th Circuit Court asking that the enforcement order be upheld. This court action has now been withdrawn by the NLRB.

Local 96 officials, including Executive Director Walter Pearson, believe no constitutional issue is involved here. Pearson charged that the court action is a clear attempt to bust the union. The case could have gone all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and would have taken up five years or more in getting there.

Meanwhile, the workers would have no contract with the home and no protection for their union activity. Kansas is a right-to-work state where workers do not have to belong to the union that represents them. Pearson has expressed fears that a five-year delay in obtaining a contract will result in the loss of all the union's membership at the home.

Pearson has also pointed out that the home is hardly a religious institution. "Half of their budget comes from the state of Kansas and from the Veterans' Administration," he noted, adding that the city paid for the rehabilitation of the building the home occupies in Kansas City. "Ye who live by the secular dollar," Pearson said, "should abide by the secular law."

Still, Archbishop Ignatius Strecker, who heads the archdiocese, adamantly states that the workers there are doing a religious mission and that the state should have no authority over them. Pearson points out that workers there make barely

more than the minimum wage. And long-time workers make only about \$3.70 an hour for doing patient care, 20 percent less than the wages paid to workers at union homes in the area.

The issue has been raised before. The right of workers to form unions was affirmed by Pope John Paul II in a 1981 encyclical on work stating that "unions are indispensable." The American Catholic bishops—a liberal group—issued a pastoral letter shortly thereafter saying that workers in Catholic health-care institutions have the right to form unions.

Msgr. Francis Lally, secretary of the United States Catholic Conference, wrote, "It's interesting how some orders of nuns have a keen social conscience when working with people in Appalachia or in urban missions, but then take a hard line when it comes to unions at their own hospitals."

Archbishop Strecker offered a different view, writing, "A union designed for our commercial-industrial society can only do irreparable harm to a St. Joseph Home and to all Church-affiliated service institutions.... Labor Union 96, in a St. Joseph Home, would not be in the best interest of our American citizens...."

How will the courts deal with the issue? The closest the Supreme Court has

The Pope has affirmed a worker's right to unionize.

ever come to deciding was in 1979 when it ruled in favor of the church in a case involving teachers at a Chicago parochial school. In *NLRB vs. the Catholic Bishop of Chicago*, the court upheld a lower court ruling that the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) was never meant to cover teachers in a religious institution. As a result, the school did not have to negotiate with the teachers' union. But the

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case—often cited as precedent for actions such as Archbishop Strecker's—does not directly relate to church-run nursing homes or hospitals.

In 1974 Congress amended the NLRA to cover non-profit health care institutions, including nursing homes. Thousands of workers were brought under the jurisdiction of the NLRB. Employees of church-run institutions were considered to be a special case by Congress. It added to the act a clause dealing with employees whose religious beliefs do not allow them to join a union.

In deciding the Chicago case, the Supreme Court stated that the legislative history of the 1974 amendment showed a clear "affirmative intention" to include church-run hospitals and nursing homes. But the Court never dealt with the constitutional question of church-state separation in the Chicago case. It took the easier course, deciding that it would only deal with schools in its ruling.

But Associate Justice William Brennan Jr. wrote a strongly worded dissent. First Amendment rights of religious institutions are very important, he noted. He said the court had shirked its duty by failing to take on what he said was the real issue: is a church-run nursing home a religious institution, or is it a business like any other non-profit institution?

Sen. Sam Ervin had proposed that the 1974 law exempt church-run homes. Sen. Alan Cranston, floor manager of the bill, explained why a religious exemption was wrong: "...Such an exception for religiously affiliated hospitals would seriously erode the existing national policy which holds religiously affiliated institutions such as proprietary nursing homes to the same standards as their nonsectarian counterparts...."

It looked as if the case of St. Joseph Home was well on its way toward bringing a Supreme Court ruling on the issue when the NLRB suddenly pulled it back.

Attorney Jack Hurley of Kansas City, who represents SEIU Local 96, said that he suspects political considerations have much to do with the case being shelved.

Initially, said Hurley, the NLRB informed him that they were pulling the case from the 10th Circuit to "rearticulate" a question of how the bargaining unit at the home was arrived at by the NLRB. St. Joseph Home had claimed that there should have been a single unit at the home representing all the workers including nuns working there. The NLRB said no. But NLRB rules also provide protection against "proliferation" of bargaining units. The NLRB at first indicated it wanted to study the St. Joseph Home case to see if the unit representing workers there should also represent nuns.

"That sounded innocent enough," said Hurley.

But the articulation period stretched into months and still the case had not gone back to the court. Then Local 96 began getting "mixed signals" from the NLRB, according to Hurley. Finally the board said that it was waiting for another case regarding bargaining unit proliferation that had a stronger chance of a favorable court decision than the St. Joseph Home case did.

Meanwhile, the entire constitutional issue of church-state separation has been shelved. Hurley charges that the NLRB—now dominated by Reagan appointees—has no intention of dealing with the issue. They just hope it will go away, he said.

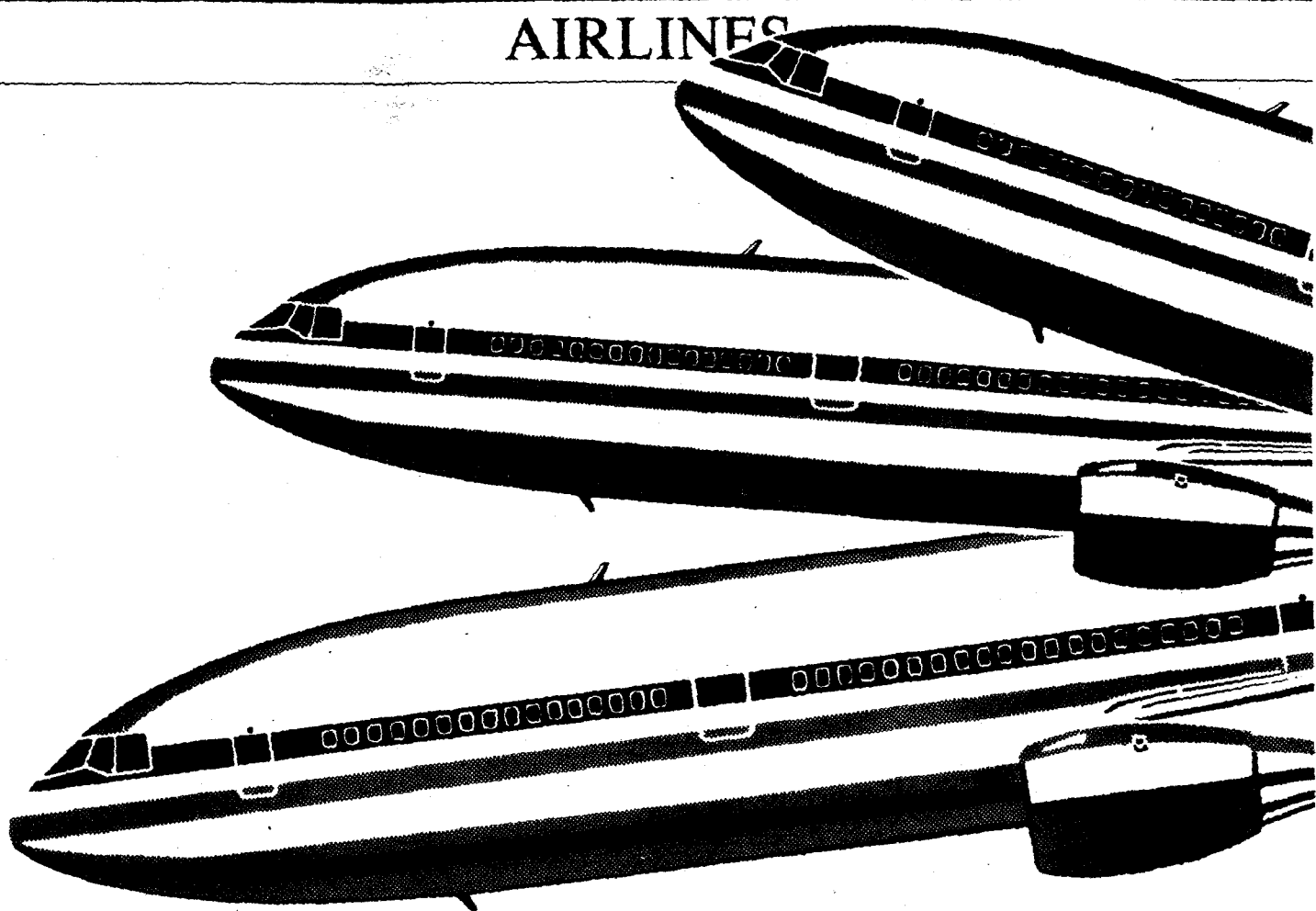
So the union planned the Rome trip, hoping to press Pope John Paul II to put into effect the principles he had espoused in his encyclical. While the women did not see the Pope, their message apparently got across. Upon their return they received the message that Archbishop Strecker had agreed to abide by the court's decision.

But since it now will not decide the case, the union notes, the archbishop's gesture is an empty one.

So the question remains: do workers at church-run institutions, whose duties are primarily secular, have the right to join unions? It's unlikely that an answer is forthcoming.

Drew Mendelson is editor of *Union Advocate*, an AFL-CIO newsweekly published in St. Paul, Minn.

AIRLINES



El Al's labor woes spread to the U.S.

By Joan Walsh

ISRAEL'S GOVERNMENT-OWNED El Al Airlines has a history of turbulent union relations at home—labor unrest has resulted in 69 strikes in 10 years and a four-month company shutdown in 1982. By contrast, for two decades El Al and the Machinists union have negotiated contracts covering the firm's 235 American workers with comparative ease.

But that string of settlements came to an end this year when the Machinists refused a 46-point list of concession demands and went on strike March 15. As the shutdown enters its eighth week, the poorly publicized strike has attracted the attention of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), which is reportedly investigating charges that El Al is illegally employing Israelis to replace the striking Machinists.

INS investigators won't confirm the probe, and when asked if investigators had contacted management about the Machinists' allegations, El Al General Manager David Schneider responded, "I'm not answering that." But strike leaders say INS criminal investigators have contacted them to look into complaints that some Israeli El Al employees have been working here illegally since the strike began.

The Machinists union, which represents ground mechanics, ticket and reservation staff, and commissary and cargo workers, says 75 replacement employees started work in mid-March. Some came from El Al operations in Chicago and Los Angeles, but many came from El Al jobs in Israel. When confronted with the Machinists' charges, El Al management contended that all Israeli replacements also held U.S. citizenship and American passports. Histadrut, the Israeli union representing all El Al employees there and pilots and flight crews here, demanded that the strikebreakers return home; El Al replied that as the Machinists returned to work, the replacements would return to Israel. With 25 percent of the strikers back on the job, El Al says only 10 "dual nationals" are still working.

The Machinists also contend that El Al managers have been performing strikers' duties in violation of their E-2 visas. District 100 General Chair Gene Hoffman reported to the INS that managers are

now doing customer service and cargo work.

While INS investigator Demetrios Georgakopoulos wouldn't confirm the INS probe, he noted, "We are aware of the El Al situation," which he described as complicated. "Some employees are dual nationals, while others are here on diplomatic visas. It's extremely fuzzy, because the airline is part of the government," Georgakopoulos said.

Israel owns 99.8 percent of the financially troubled airline. (Histadrut owns the other .2 percent.) The company went into receivership for court protection from its creditors in early 1983, a result of the four-month shutdown provoked by a wave of strikes in September 1982. El Al emerged from the business stoppage with concessions from its Israeli employees, most notably a pledge that each of the eight unions representing workers could no longer strike on its own; it now takes a decision by Histadrut. It also laid off 1,000 of its 4,900 workers and won wage and work-rule concessions from the unions.

The American employees, laid off without pay during the four-month stoppage, returned to work without concessions. But almost immediately the company began saying similar austerity measures would be necessary here, including a 30-month wage freeze, subcontracting commissary and automotive operations (which would lay off 22 people), vacation reductions, unlimited use of part-time employees and work-rule relaxation.

Schneider, general manager for El Al's North and Central America operations, contends the concessions are necessary to bring the firm back from the brink of bankruptcy. "It's not as if we're pulling in fat profits," he said. "We're surrounded by non-union shops cutting fares because they pay 40 to 50 percent of what we do. We can't live with these make-work rules."

While Hoffman and others say the

The strikers charge that El Al is illegally replacing them with Israelis.

union is willing to agree to certain concessions, including a 15-month wage freeze, vacation cuts and easing work rules, Schneider says those offers were either made late or indirectly. Counters Hoffman: "He's a liar. We made that formal counterproposal April 5 and they said it wasn't enough to reach an agreement."

Even the apparent communication problems convince the Machinists that the company is not out to negotiate a settlement, but to break the union. A visit to El Al as the strike began by a high-level ministry of transport official was portrayed as a symbol of the government's support for the company's intransigence, says Machinist steward and reservations clerk Motti Horowitz. Company officials have said they have "unlimited funds" to endure the strike, implying a government financial commitment as well. Israeli public opinion has been turned against the strikers by newspaper reports that Machinist leaders have made anti-Semitic remarks in bargaining—although many, including Hoffman, are Jewish—and that the union itself is pro-Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

With Israeli replacements reportedly housed at New York's Hotel Lexington and strikebreakers escorted to and from work in armed limousines, the strike is not without a financial cost to El Al. But Schneider says the firm is saving money for now. "We haven't had one cancellation, one delay. Obviously this is not the best situation for the long term, but we're getting by with a lot less workers."

Both sides are digging in their heels. Once past the seven-week mark, strikers became eligible for unemployment insurance under New York law, which has strengthened the union's ability to stay out. The recent INS interest was a boost as well, since the strikers have had little success attracting attention or support for their efforts. Demonstrations at Kennedy Airport and the Israeli consulate have drawn hundreds of strikers and their supporters, but no media. Complaints to numerous politicians, from President Reagan to Gov. Mario Cuomo, have received no reply.

Hoffman and Chief of Stewards Stuart Schwartzberg met with U.S. Rep. Tom Downey (D-NY), who they say told them he "wouldn't pick a fight with the government of Israel." Up to now, the only political support has come from New York Assemblyman Frank Barbaro (D-Brooklyn), who got 59 assembly colleagues to sign a petition calling on the Israeli government to bargain with the strikers.

Schneider, however, believes the company is beyond reproach, even in its use of Israeli strikebreakers. "We consulted our attorneys and we knew exactly what we could do and we have not violated any laws. We're squeaky clean," he said. "When they [the INS] inquire of us, we will explain it all to them."

CENTRAL AMERICA

Austerity measures increase domestic tension in Mexico



Traditional May Day marches, pictured above, supported the government. This year's did not.

By Sylvia Maxfield and
Raul Hinojosa Ojeda

MEXICO CITY

MEXICAN PRESIDENT MIGUEL de la Madrid arrived in Washington last week with smoke still settling back home from the most tumultuous May Day parade in the country's recent history. Traditionally, the government-sponsored march is an occasion for workers to show their support for the ruling party, the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI).

But this May Day, for the first time in 40 years, independent unions and left opposition groups joined the 1.5 million who marched past the president. Protesters' slogans often drowned out the official commentator, and opposition party leafleteers couldn't keep up with the demand. Three government observers were burned by molotov cocktails thrown from the passing crowd.

Although this doesn't parallel massive street riots in the Dominican Republic or daily supermarket raids in Brazil, it illustrates the squeeze that is being felt by all government leaders in Latin America. From the Rio Grande to Tierra del Fuego, they face draconian International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan conditions on the one hand, and growing popular protest of economic austerity on the other.

From the time he assumed the presidency in 1982, de la Madrid has used the traditional strength of the Mexican state to forge a new strategy that skillfully deflects both international and domestic pressures. On the international front, Mexico has taken a lead in regional Central America and debt initiatives while aggressively negotiating its own accom-

modation with the IMF and multinational corporations.

Domestically, these policies have been complicated by the most severe reduction in real wages that the government has dared in recent history. But, anticipating labor opposition, de la Madrid has moved to fragment the traditional power of key labor organizations, counterbalancing this with a tolerance for left independent union activity.

Reagan pressures.

The question in Washington last week was whether Reagan would succeed in using the threat of reduced economic assistance to force a change in Mexico's anti-interventionist Central America policy. Since anti-U.S. rhetoric and independent foreign policy has long been the way the Mexican government has deflected attention from unpopular domestic policies, it is likely de la Madrid will try to hold fast.

In March, Reagan signed a national security decision directive ordering the State Department to write a "communication and diplomacy master plan" to persuade de la Madrid to back the administration's Central America policy. Mexico, along with the other Contadora group nations—Colombia, Panama and Venezuela—supports the search for a negotiated solution to the regional crisis. De la Madrid's position is that the problems of Central America are not rooted in East-West struggles but in economic hardship and that these countries should be left to determine their own destinies without outside interference.

National Security Decision Directive 124, which also instructs the CIA to persuade U.S.-sympathizing Central American leaders to pressure de la Madrid, is part of a Reagan administration strategy that goes back to at least 1982. A State Department briefing paper leaked in September of that year noted that U.S. financial assistance to Mexico "could be helpful in pointing Mexico toward the right internal policies," could lead it to be "less aggressive" in foreign policy, as well as encouraging it to negotiate a trade agreement and to cooperate in controlling illegal migration.

While Mexico has adopted economic policies that are more in line with the U.S., it has so far ceded little ground on Central America. In part this is because finding a quick, non-military solution to

the crisis is a matter of national security for Mexico—which is increasingly feeling the heat of the war on its southern border. According to official estimates, 30,000-40,000 Guatemalan refugees have now settled inside Mexico. The real number is probably at least twice as high.

On April 30, Guatemalan military forces attacked a refugee camp six miles inside the border, leaving six dead, among them a pregnant woman. In response, de la Madrid rejected the possibility of increasing Mexican military presence in the area and reiterated his support of Contadora.

Playing by the rules.

Mexico's Contadora strategy must be examined in the context of the country's increasing austerity. In fact, the first Contadora meeting in January 1983 coincided with de la Madrid's taking office and signing an agreement with the IMF.

From 1979 to 1982, Mexico's foreign debt doubled, reaching \$80 billion, second only to Brazil's global record of \$90 billion. Gambling on oil revenues, the federal government dramatically increased expenditure in the late '70s, only to be caught between high interest rates, unexpectedly low oil prices and falling terms of trade for agricultural exports. The crisis came to a head in fall 1982, with outgoing President Lopez Portillo's declaration of a temporary moratorium on debt payments and nationalization of all the country's banks.

These actions reflected a deep split within the Mexican government over the viability of the country's traditionally nationalistic international economic policies. This split was resolved when de la Madrid took office and immediately fired the group of ministers who had promoted the bank nationalization. He and his foreign-trained advisors embarked on an important redirection of Mexico's economic policies, designed to open the Mexican economy to international trade and investment.

Price controls and subsidies were lifted to make domestic prices more comparable with international ones. Regulation of foreign investors, including a rule that investments have at least 51 percent Mexican ownership, were liberalized as part of an effort to attract multinationals. Abandoning a traditional policy of promoting import substitution,

de la Madrid changed the tariff and subsidy structure to promote production of exports. A new \$500 million Ford plant in northern Mexico, built for vehicle export to the U.S., is now enjoying subsidies from the Mexican government worth \$300 million.

Above all, these policies are designed to rehabilitate Mexico in the eyes of its international creditors. So intent was Mexico on this goal that it overshot IMF conditions for reducing public spending and its trade deficits. As a result, Finance Minister Siva Herzog became a hero of the international financial community. In late March, Siva Herzog's fast footwork to avoid an Argentine loan default and serious first-quarter losses for U.S. banks won him even higher accolades. The joint Mexican, Colombian, Venezuelan and Brazilian bail-out for Argentina that he and U.S. Treasury Department officials have devised, effectively makes Mexico and the three other Latin American creditors policemen for the IMF.

Latin American creditors will be paid by the U.S. Fed as soon as Argentina signs an agreement with the IMF. Debtors themselves, they are obviously anxious to see the agreement signed.

Mexico is hoping that its new policeman role will gain it leverage in Washington. The joint loan sets a precedent for coordinated action among Latin American debtors and gives de la Madrid a new card to play. It puts him in a position to respond to Reagan's economic blackmail with threats of further joint action that could be damaging to U.S. banks.

Domestic repercussions.

The effects of this international accommodation have been devastating for the majority of Mexican workers as well as many local business owners. The recently released Banco de Mexico annual report indicates that gross domestic production fell almost 5 percent in 1983 while inflation continued at a rate of 80 percent. Wages during this period were allowed to rise by only 39 percent, with the purchasing power of minimum wage earners down an estimated 70 percent. Meanwhile, industrial production fell by more than 7 percent, while exports rose by almost 13 percent.

Upon entering office, de la Madrid initiated a series of moves designed to preempt political opposition to his policies. The dramatic arrests of previous administration officials provided scapegoats on whom to blame the financial crisis in the short term. Far more important have been attempts to revive rivalries among various pro-PRI labor confederations for the government's favors. Around May Day of last year, the leader of the PRI's main labor confederation for the last 40 years, Fidel Velasquez, reacted to the de la Madrid strategy by leading a call for a general strike.

At the last moment, however, only the left and independent unions went ahead with a series of costly strikes, while Velasquez reverted to fighting for his traditional position of power in the PRI. This year's May Day arrangement, in which the left-independent unions were allowed to march in the official parade, represents a departure from previous stands by both groups. The official confederations are using this as a new tactic by which to pressure the government while the left has decided that the official labor movement must be a central arena for their battles. If this *rapprochement* between official and independent labor can withstand the recent May Day violence and the upcoming June negotiations with the government, it could signal a new phase of union opposition to de la Madrid policies.

Mexico is far from being the next domino to fall in the violent struggle that grips Central America today. But as debt repayment mandates continued austerity and the Mexican government continues to reshape the economy to make it more internationally competitive, the rules of the domestic political game are changing.

Raul Hinojosa Ojeda is a researcher at El Colegio de Mexico. Sylvia Maxfield is a researcher at Centro de Investigacion y Docencia Economica.

Mexico is now
"policeman" for
International
Monetary Fund
policies.

By Diana Johnstone

BRUSSELS

BELGIUM IS THE FORGOTTEN country of the Euromissile deployments. As soon as the first batch of American nuclear missiles was brought into the big three deployment countries—West Germany, Britain and Italy—at the end of 1983, attention turned to Holland as the last outpost of strong peace movement resistance. Belgium was neglected, or at least taken for granted.

In the NATO deployment timetable, Belgium is sandwiched between the big three, where deployment has begun, and Holland, which is supposed to swallow its dose of 48 cruise missiles in 1987 and 1988. Belgium's turn comes next year. Some officials say the first of Belgium's 48 cruise missiles will arrive in March 1985. Others say November of next year. The Belgian government is vague.

Belgians have had precious little say in the matter. Public opinion polls have consistently shown about 60 percent oppose nuclear missiles on Belgian territory. In 1981 and again last year, hundreds of thousands of people protested the missiles in Brussels' largest post-war demonstrations.

But the Belgian constitution says that defense questions are up to the king and his ministers. Thus, in contrast to other deployment countries, there has never been decisive debate or a vote in the Belgian parliament on the NATO nuclear missile modernization.

But last November 10, at the end of only the second debate on the issue in four years, the Belgian parliament confirmed its own impotence by voting that it was up to the government to decide.

"So we will learn some day by radio or another source that the first elements of cruise missiles have arrived at the base at Florennes [where Americans recently arrived to start preparing the base]," the Flemish Socialist Party's floor leader and defense policy specialist Louis Tobback told *In These Times* in a recent interview. "That's the way things are going, unless something happens in Holland."

Officially, the Belgian government has not yet decided to accept the missiles and is still bound by a pledge to consider the state of Soviet-U.S. arms control negotiations. But according to Tobback, the decision has already been made. "There will be no such thing as a day when there is a solemn decision," said Tobback. Instead, just before the missiles arrive they'll announce that "since there is no hope for a result of negotiations, we have to accept the missiles."

But the Dutch parliament has to say "yes" or "no" to the missiles by June, and Tobback thinks there could be "an accident in Holland." If the Dutch government were brought down on the issue, then things could change for Belgium, too. Tobback said, "For once Mr. Weinberger is right" when he foresees a "domino" effect.

The Flemish Socialist leader predicted that even if the Dutch reached a compromise—for example, reducing the number of cruise missiles—this would have repercussions in Belgium.

The Dutch-speaking Flemish Belgians are as opposed to nuclear armament as their cousins in Holland, and opposition is also strong in the French-speaking Walloon population. But along with linguistic division, history has endowed the Belgians with less confidence than the Dutch in their ability to lead moral crusades.

The Flemish Socialists have always strongly opposed the NATO "double decision" to station new nuclear missiles in Western Europe able to strike targets in the Soviet Union. So have the Flemish nationalists (Volksunie), the ecological party AGALEV ("live differently"), the French-speaking Socialist party and the very active Catholic peace organization Pax Christi.

Belgium's role.

Although Belgians may be modest about their country's ability to stand up alone against bigger powers, some of them hope that by getting together, Europe's



IN THE WORLD

BELGIUM

Belgians not yet reconciled to cruise

smaller countries can play an important role. The Euromissiles fiasco has stimulated an effort by Socialists from the small northern NATO countries to get together and exchange information in a group they call "Scandilux," whose members are the two Belgian Socialist parties, the Dutch, Luxemburgers, Danish and Norwegian Socialists, with the German Social Democratic Party an active "observer." Scandilux is an outgrowth of the Belgian Socialists' experience with their own foreign minister, Henri Simonet, in 1979, when NATO ministers met in Brussels to approve the "double track" decision. Simonet has since left the French-speaking Socialist party over the missile issue.

When the NATO ministers met in Brussels on Dec. 11 and 12, 1979, the Socialists in the Belgian government were still balking. At that moment, recalls Tobback, "we were told by Foreign Affairs Minister Henri Simonet that we were alone with our point of view, that the Danish agreed, that the Dutch agreed, that only the Belgians were holding out. That was used as an argument. A few minutes later he went to the Danish saying that the Belgians agreed, the Dutch agreed, and only the Danes were still saying no. And the Dutch got the same performance. But we learned about it only

afterward, and the Scandilux group was originally intended to avoid such situations in the future."

The meetings are now going on, and although the member Socialist Parties have been put in the opposition since the December 1979 NATO decision, if they get back in office they will be much better prepared than before to promote a coordinated approach to military defense and nuclear disarmament issues.

When NATO was founded in the late '40s, said Tobback, it involved the military defense of a political, economic and even cultural community of interest. There used to be an Atlantic community of interest. "Today this is finished," he said. "And Western Europeans have very great difficulties seeing or accepting this. The U.S. today no longer has any Atlantic strategy. There is a U.S. global strategy, and more and more Europeans are realizing that Western Europe is just one factor in the United States' overall global perception. The preferential relationship is fading away."

The North Atlantic Treaty commitment saying that an attack on one would be considered an attack on all is "nonsense today," he added. If the Americans and the Russians clash off the shore of Lebanon, "the U.S. is going to answer that attack out of Frankfurt or Hannover

Flemish Socialist Party floor leader Louis Tobback

—then who will have started the war?" Or if things go wrong in Central America, "the only place on the globe where Soviets and Americans are facing each other nose to nose is in central Europe. So who will have started the war? The question becomes totally ridiculous. But we will be involved in a war where we are not even on the American side. Even [British Prime Minister Margaret] Thatcher will not be on the American side, but she'll be implicated with all the others in an American war that even the U.S. Senate doesn't like."

The Flemish Socialist leader said he was simply not ready to "die for the phantasms of the Reagan administration." But he does not expect anything different from another administration. "I strongly believe that this has nothing to do with the personality of the president," he said. "I think there is an establishment taking over in the U.S. at this moment and strongly eliminating the pre-

The Flemish Socialists have always opposed the NATO 'double-decision.'

vious establishment. I don't much like these terms, but if it makes things clearer, you can say the Californians are taking over from the WASPs. In any case, there is a shift and the new establishment is not linked to Western Europe like the old one."

The American advantage.

"Gary Hart, or Mondale, or Reagan or whoever else—there will be no change in the U.S. It won't be long before someone from the National Security Council has explained to the new president what a big security advantage this way of positioning nuclear missiles is for the U.S. It's as if the Soviet Union were capable of attacking the U.S. with nuclear missiles from Cuban or Mexican territory."

No American president will give up this advantage, according to Tobback. "One can imagine all kinds of scenarios about it, but they are all to the advantage of U.S. security, and to the disadvantage of Western European security."

If an American president looked farther than the immediate military advantage and realized that "in the long run this is going to cause the real breakdown of NATO itself," then he might withdraw the missiles for political reasons. But Tobback saw no sign of such a "miracle."

"Yet I think that Europeans and Americans also have to realize that the U.S. has to pay the price for being the first in the alliance. If it's not in their interest, I'm persuaded they wouldn't stay in it. If they want to become isolationist, that's their problem. I'm not going to say 'thank you for staying in Europe.'" said Tobback.

"I'm very reluctant, to say the least, to come under Soviet influence. But if we 300 million Western Europeans came under Soviet influence—with our economic, human and industrial potential and still with the greatest market on earth—that would mean that the U.S. would become some kind of super-Brazil. The U.S. would be second, even third, for at least the next century. But so long as it wants to be the big superpower—able to impose the dollar with all the fantasy included as being the major exchange, able to impose on the International Monetary Fund and the rest of the world its economic conditions—it will have to pay for that favor."

According to Tobback, the Flemish Socialists believe that former West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was "trapped" into taking blame for the Pershing II and cruise missiles because he really believed in the possibility of arms control negotiations, whereas the American idea was just to put those missiles in

Continued on page 23

Salaries

Continued from page 3

and Japan. How could any production worker take seriously their exhortation to work hard for the good of the company?"

David Kotz, visiting professor of economics at the University of California at Berkeley, has argued that the managerial revolution has been overstated. Banks and big stockholders still exercise great influence, according to Kotz, and the managers aren't ripping them off.

"Big stockholders and bankers want a class of people in management to identify with them. They want them to identify with the very rich," he said, explaining why such high managerial pay is accepted. "There is a good argument from the viewpoint of the banker and large shareholder. It's political. It's part of maintaining the rightward drift of government policy. They want to share the spoils within the capitalist class."

This becomes especially attractive when many companies are awash in expanding profits but see few attractive new investments. GM is a case in point. In the years since workers made massive concessions, theoretically to save jobs and permit the industry to become more competitive, GM domestic investment has declined from \$5.552 billion in 1981 to \$4.534 billion in 1982 to \$3.125 billion in 1983. GM invested only \$2,529 per work-

er in 1982, compared to \$6,124 by Nissan and \$6,507 by Honda, according to the Institute for Labor Education and Research. Instead of living up to their commitment to spend \$1 billion to develop a new small car, GM has instead adopted its Asian strategy—importing or producing small cars jointly with Japanese or Korean firms, thereby giving up many thousands of jobs for U.S. workers.

What did GM do with its money? Besides the record sums for its top officers, it distributed bonuses to 5,808 other managers that averaged \$31,284 each—far more than the annual wages of the best-paid production workers. The 365,000 production workers—whose sacrifices meant at least as much or more for the renewed profit of the company as anything the managers did—split a bonus pool the same size as that for the executives. Each worker got an average of \$640. Last week GM also announced that dividends for stockholders will rise by 25 percent.

All this, of course, is happening while the auto companies are talking about greater sacrifices from workers in this year's contract negotiations and demanding 3 percent price cuts from suppliers, who have already been squeezed for years by GM.

Reagan's trade representative William Brock quickly reacted to the auto executive salary increases by announcing opposition to any renewal of restraints on Japanese imports. UAW president Owen Bieber denounced Brock's decision as "punishing workers for the greed of their bosses." The union is optimistic that it

can turn the controversy to its advantage and show the limitation of an auto policy that restrains imports but does nothing to compel U.S. companies to become competitive. The union agrees that the companies have abused the import controls.

Many editorialists have lamented the auto executive pay on the grounds that it makes it harder to legitimize the battle against worker pay increases. Undoubtedly it will. But some within the UAW fear that GM in particular wants to steer worker discontent into a big pay increase rather than job security or other controls on corporate behavior. The company can then use the excuse of highly paid workers to justify its abandonment of small car production.

For years, it has been implicitly—and at times openly—argued that U.S. auto worker pay should be reduced to Japanese levels, while other factors, such as poor management or the deleterious trade effects of a strong dollar, are downplayed. Few executives compare their salaries with the Japanese as they make their arguments about how they're worth every penny they make.

But Japanese firms pay far less to both get and keep managers who obviously have some talent. Vladimir Pucik of the University of Michigan concluded that the average pay of the top 50 executives within Japanese auto firms was about six to seven times the top blue-collar pay; in the U.S. it was 12 to 18 times as high. More recently Robert Cole, also from Michigan, found the ratio to be five to seven times the top blue-collar pay in

Japan, 16 to 18 times in the U.S., not counting the massive stock options that are more common here.

David Gordon rejects as irrelevant discussion of whether executives earn or deserve their pay, since he denies that there is any connection between social worth or merit and pay at any level. Although there is a market for executives, who can leave to go elsewhere for more money, it is not a classic "free market." Managers as a class have great control over determining levels of executive pay, creating their own self-justificatory upward spiral.

Sometimes the case is even more clear cut. Green and Tenneriello cite numerous instances of executives—like Archie McCordell, formerly of International Harvester—who received huge bonuses and salary increases even when their companies' profits and stock value were plummeting. One academic study published in 1978 showed "absolutely no relationship between stockholder return and executive pay" and "very little relationship between executive pay and executive performance."

Yet even where corporate performance has recently improved, it may have been the result of a cyclical pickup in sales unrelated to any management skill. "If there's a turnaround or stock goes up dramatically, you can't automatically attribute that to management, especially in cases of company restructuring or major worker concessions," argues Michael Kieschnick, a founder of Working Assets Money Fund.

Managers say their pay is justified and necessary. Kotz rejoins, "Do you know anyone who thinks they're overpaid? Top executive pay is unrelated to any social principle of eliciting desired skills. Being a top executive is relatively interesting, exciting and challenging. To pay people millions to do that job is unnecessary."

What can be done? Green and Tenneriello suggest "merit pay" reforms and greater independence for directors, but Herman is very skeptical about the prospect for such changes. Gordon urges stronger collective bargaining, facilitated by changes in labor law that make such management decisions mandatory subjects of bargaining. Kotz argues that unions, when they make concessions, must get ironclad counterconcessions and agreements from management.

Some observers, such as Drucker, argue for voluntary (or publicly imposed) limits on executive pay, such as establishing some ratio or formula. But this type of approach focuses only on the narrow issue of salaries and is most concerned about the destabilizing threats to the legitimacy of corporate power rather than control over its expansion and use. Lekachman and others favor more progressive taxes on income and capital gains. In his book, Herman argues that only a significant expansion of government-owned enterprise can provide the basis for effective regulation of corporations, including restraints on excessive pay.

The huge salaries may seem obscene and unjust to anyone who still believes an egalitarian society is essential to democracy (a view held with ambivalence at best by most Americans, who—I would wager—both resent and envy the executive windfalls). It may seem particularly offensive when so many industries are pleading hardship and when so many workers have been subjected to hardship.

But the huge salaries are also symptomatic of an ever-present lust for power and rewards in an anarchic, individualistic drive for success defined by our culture in the narrowest of terms: money. Reagan has unleashed, encouraged and attempted to legitimate that engine of greed. He has inspired their arrogance.

Yet the irony is that by raising class friction, the political support for the new barons of industry declines. Furthermore, in an era when industrial success in the international marketplace requires more democracy and egalitarianism at work, the reinforced, over-rewarded and bloated hierarchy of management threatens the very basis of their wealth. The successors to the Messrs. Anderson and Caldwell—who will have packed their moneybags and moved on—may then ask: did Reaganomics work after all? ■

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BRAZIL

By Mitchell Torton

RIO DE JANEIRO

FOR NEARLY A WEEK LEADING up to the April 25 congressional vote, Brazil played a harrowing game of political brinkmanship, with high stakes and few fixed rules. In the end, the opposition lost the vote on the Dante de Oliveira constitutional amendment, which would have restored presidential elections after 20 years of military rule. And the nation, sagging under the weight of the worst economic crisis in its history, grew momentarily sullen after months of exuberant protest.

Starting this January, an unprecedented mass movement with the slogan *diretas ja*—direct presidential elections now—had swept Brazil. From the southern *pampas* to the drought-stricken northeast, at least five million protesters turned out in a steady succession of demonstrations, drawing the largest crowds in recent history. The protests were uniformly non-violent, with a peculiarly Brazilian air of festivity.

The highpoint of the *diretas ja* movement was to have occurred April 10 in Rio de Janeiro, where Gov. Leonel Brizola choreographed a single demonstration of one million people—with a laser-beam light show and a broad-based rostrum of speakers. Six days later, 1.5 million people turned out in Sao Paulo's Praça de Se, protesting to the accompaniment of the Symphony Orchestra of Campinas as well as samba superstar Beth Carvalho. The country's leading soccer star, Socrates, who has challenged the military to arrest him for his socialist beliefs, announced to the Sao Paulo multitude that if the Dante de Oliveira amendment were passed, he would scrap a multi-million dollar offer to play in Italy and remain in Brazil.

Between the two giant demonstrations, a small but emotional protest was held at the 12th Annual Gramado Film Festival in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul. As adolescent autograph-seekers watched in awe, many of the country's most glamorous stars marched from a resort hotel to the theater where Brazil's newest films were being premiered. As April 25 neared, the amendment had the tacit support of the vice president of the Republic, important sectors of the military itself, most major business and financial lobbies and, according to polls, some 90 percent of the populace.

Then, suddenly, came the hammer blow of President Joao Figueiredo's emergency measures—a week of heavy-handed repression unknown in Brazil since the beginning of *abertura* (liberalization) in 1979, but still fresh in the minds of those old enough to remember the reign of terror in the late '60s and early '70s. Under the emergency decree, journalists from leading dailies were detained without charges, political news was heavily censored and Congress was surrounded several times by the army. Meanwhile, desperately isolated army hardliners (the so-called *duros*) provoked manic speculation about which way they would turn next.

"Without a doubt, the objective of these emergency measures is to create a climate of panic among the legislators," said Luis Inacio "Lula" da Silva, president of the Labor Party.

Ulysses Guimarães, president of the Democratic Movement Party, Brazil's largest opposition party, said, "Any congressman or senator who is intimidated is not a real public servant. Where is the calamity to justify emergency measures when we are demonstrating with millions of people in perfect order? The real threat to social peace comes from hunger, misery and the surrender to foreign interests." (Later, in Congress, Guimarães officially proposed for the first time a five-year moratorium on Brazil's almost \$100 billion external debt and a breaking off of relations with the International Monetary Fund.)

Gen. Newton "Nini" Cruz, an old friend of the president's and renowned



In April, President Figueiredo's emergency measures brought a week of repression unknown in Brazil since 1979.

The movement for elections continues

right-wing fanatic, was put in charge of executing the emergency measures, which were limited to Brasília and 10 surrounding localities, where Cruz is regional army commander. This technically gave the general the power to depose public officials and freeze private assets as well as to suspend *habeas corpus*, convert public buildings into emergency prisons and censor all telecommunications going in and out of the capital.

Gen. Cruz executed his mandate with evident pleasure, exulting at one point, "We don't allow journalists here." On the eve of the vote, with all military units on alert throughout the country, a spontaneous outburst of potbanging and hornblowing blanketed Brazil in a cacophony of dissent. In the capital, Cruz waded into a noisy traffic jam to beat on the hoods of cars with a truncheon and to arrest motorists.

By that time he had already personally accosted two congressmembers and had forbidden any kind of public observance of the 24th anniversary of the inauguration of Brasília, the "Buck Rogers capital." The ban on public meetings did not extend, however, to an awesome military procession Cruz addressed marking the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the very army division that was now ringing the nation's Congress.

Then, with the "Berlin wall" separating the nation from its capital, April 25 arrived. More than 100 Congress members stood to denounce the "national shame" of the *emergencia*. The author of the direct elections amendment, 32-year-old Dante de Oliveira, a former member of the revolutionary group MR-8, was clearly shaken and speaking with difficulty: "The people did not go into the streets for *diretas ja* just to have window dressing in the presidential selection, but for urgent and profound changes in the economic and social model."

The administration, confronted with the threat of wholesale defections from members of its own party—the disingenuously titled Social Democratic Party (PDS)—worked late into the night exerting manifold pressures to block a quorum. And when the voting finally took place, after midnight, 113 members of the lower house stayed absent, not only blocking the two-thirds majority necessary to alter the constitution, but in fact fulfilling the government's wish to deny a quorum (only 65 voted "no"). The direct election amendment was defeated despite a clear majority of 298 votes, and the adamant support of a united Brazil.

Though the government managed to strong-arm its way through the Dante de Oliveira crisis, nothing has really been resolved. The TV and radio stations are back reporting the real news, which is that the movement for direct elections will not die. From left to right, the print media has excoriated Figueiredo for imposing the state of emergency and especially for handing it over to Cruz.

The PDS has presented an alternative amendment to Congress, the so-called Figueiredo amendment, which was intro-

duced recently as a defensive measure against the Dante de Oliveira groundswell. It calls for increased legislative power—at present the system is overwhelmingly presidentialist—and for direct elections in 1988.

Negotiated settlement?

Already there have been first steps toward a negotiated settlement, which would include a scrapping of the two leading PDS presidential hopefuls, who stand to win in the originally anticipated and adroitly rigged, "electoral college." Ironically, both these candidates—Minister of the Interior Mario Andreazza and former Sao Paulo Gov. Paulo Maluf—are civilians; and the 688-member electoral college, though structured to perpetuate the PDS in power and now thoroughly discredited, appeared initially as a cornerstone of the *abertura*.

Clearly, any compromise would have to encompass a much tougher approach to foreign banks and the IMF, and a moderate policy of economic growth and social welfare protection for the poor, who are slipping in ever greater numbers toward starvation: the minimum wage just went up to 90,000 *cruzeiros* per month, which, translated into dollar terms, equals about \$60, or roughly 25 percent less than the dollar equivalent of the July 1983 minimum wage. Meanwhile, the official inflation rate gallops ahead at 230 percent annually, and unemployment and underemployment exceed 40 percent of the workforce.

The military, fearing the Argentine precedent, will seek guarantees against reprisals for the severe human rights abuses of the past and against investigations into the high-level corruption that has become pervasive. Any interim president arrived at by consensus would face a nation in the throes of unprecedented crisis; and the mass movement may be unwilling to settle for direct elections later. And the same thing may be said for the hardliners, who see no merit in a return, gradual or otherwise, to genuine democracy. They recognize the possibility of Gov. Leonel Brizola, of the State of Rio de Janeiro, being elected president,

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TO BE OR NOT TO BE...

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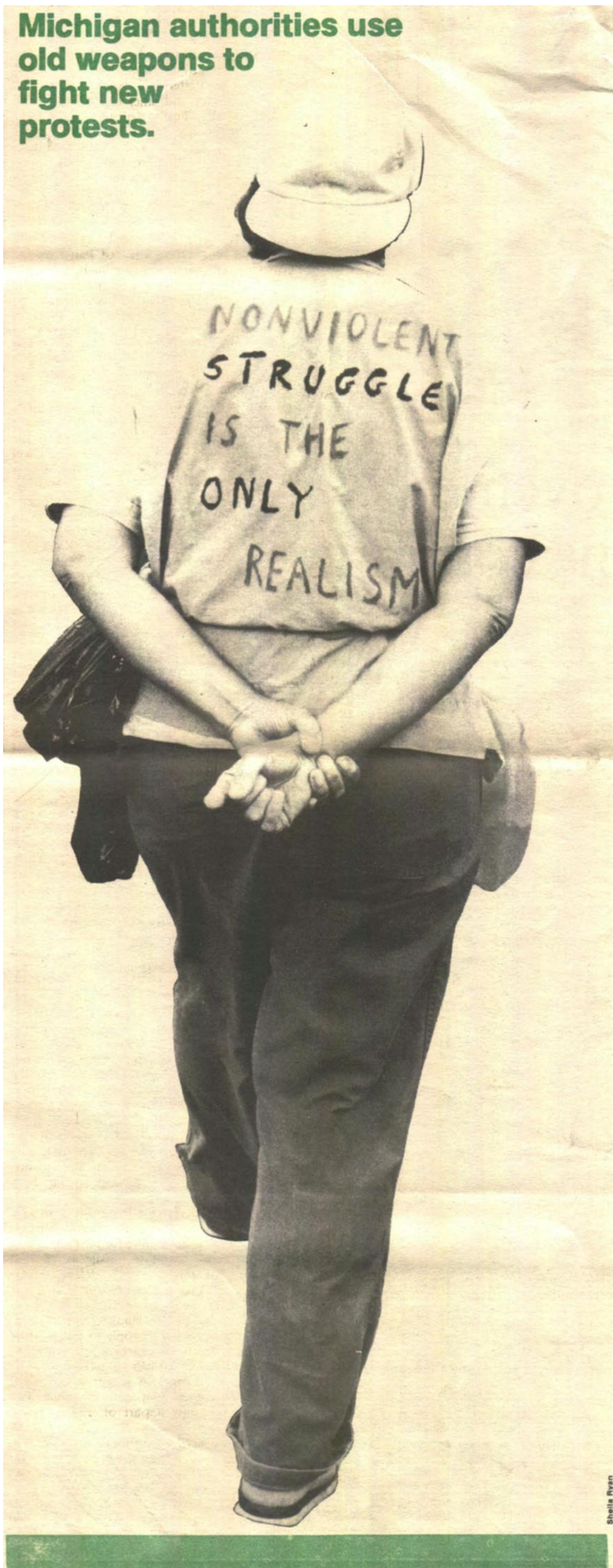
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Michigan authorities use old weapons to fight new protests.



By George Corsetti

AS MORE PEOPLE NONVIOLENTLY protest U.S. nuclear policies and their corporate offshoots, they are encountering increasingly stiff legal reaction. Since last fall, some police forces and the FBI have resorted to the tactics of the '60s to suppress dissent.

Authorities are using infiltration, intimidation and conspiracy charges against protesters in Michigan, where religious pacifists and other dissidents have been demonstrating at Air Force bases and military plants.

In the latest of a series of actions, 14 people were arrested during the Easter weekend at three Michigan antinuclear protests.

On Good Friday, five members of the Lansing-based Covenant for Peace were arrested at Williams International, a suburban Detroit defense plant that makes engines for the cruise missile. The protesters had chained themselves to the gates of the plant and blocked traffic. They pled guilty to a trespassing charge and received three-day jail terms.

Another judge, however, found them in contempt of court for violating a civil injunction against trespassing at the plant, which has been the site of numerous arrests and a year-long vigil by the Covenant for Peace. The judge refuses to release the five unless they promise not to return to Williams. The protesters, who include a Catholic priest and a 77-year-old Methodist minister, have thus far refused to make such a promise and remain in jail.

In another demonstration at K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, two people were arrested after pouring blood on the Strategic Air Command sign. The base is a future site of cruise missile deployment and will also serve as a nerve center for the Navy's proposed Project ELF, an extremely-low-frequency-communication network for nuclear submarines. Those arrested have pled guilty to trespassing, have refused bail and remain in jail pending sentencing.

In the third protest, seven demonstrators were arrested at Wurtsmith Air Force Base in Central Michigan, where cruise missiles have already been deployed. All the protesters were released pending trial June 2.

These local protests against Michigan military plants and bases began last September when members of Covenant for Peace wrote to Williams International. They requested a meeting to discuss converting the factory to peaceful production and announced their intention to block factory gates at the end of November.

Williams refused to meet with the protesters. Instead they called for a meeting with the FBI, Michigan State Police, Oakland County Sheriff's Department, the U.S. Justice Department, the Oakland County Prosecutor and three separate divisions of the Department of Defense.

The end of November rolled around and 54 protesters, mostly nuns, priests, ministers and their friends, blocked the gates as they said they would, trying to shut down the plant. They expected to get up to 30 days in jail for simple trespass. Instead, they are arrested and charged with nine separate crimes including three separate counts of conspiracy, all of which could get them more than a year in jail. In addition, the police:

- Used undercover Michigan State Police to infiltrate a legal demonstration in apparent violation of a court order prohibiting political spying;
- Arrested an English woman, Jean Hutchison, whose only crime was to show a film and speak at a meeting;
- Used an informant to infiltrate meetings at a Pontiac church;
- Raided a church hall, secretly recording conversations and seizing personal papers of a priest and the records of the protesters; and
- Tried to disqualify the judges hearing the case, saying they were biased in favor of the pacifists.

This attack on civil liberties—right to assemble was so massive now threatens to overshadow the missile issue that first sparked the tests.

The protesters' week-long campaign officially began with an Interfaith Service on Sunday, November 27 at the Walled Lake factory. Williams officials had been informed that the violent demonstration would consist of praying, singing and a few speeches, no blockading of gates until the next day.

Despite this announcement, the Michigan State Police ordered two undercover police to infiltrate the demonstration. The State Police had, for a number of years, operated a political intelligence unit, commonly known as the "red squad" or subversive activities which frequently infiltrated such demonstrations. In 1976, Judge James Tate found the laws authorizing the squad to be unconstitutional and them to disband the unit. Lt. William Hassinger, who had been involved with the now-illegal police spy unit, testified that the police presence at the service violated the court order, "The troopers were not there to infiltrate the demonstration. They were there as observers—to stand on the periphery and watch the crowd."

In fact, court testimony shows that troopers, Deborah Lapp and Garrison, were there to gather information on the peace group's plans. In casual clothes, they mingled with 1,000 demonstrators and, as part of the demonstration, joined in "singing songs and passing a candle."

The two state cops also infiltrated a meeting later that evening at St. Vincent de Paul church in Pontiac. This meeting, attended by about 150 people, consisted of non-violence training given by Peter Dougherty, meetings of affinity groups, praying and singing.

The importance of such state infiltration of meetings and demonstrations is that the now-illegal red squad is functioning in a modified form for political spying is, by its very nature, secret activity, it is virtually impossible to know how widespread it is today. Soble, attorney for the plaintiffs in the red squad case, acknowledged "there is no monitoring of what the police are presently doing."

In a similar lawsuit in Chicago, the court ordered a stop to political infiltration and then set up a strict review system to prevent police spying at demonstrations and meetings. In the case of the Michigan protesters where organizers openly said they would commit civil disobedience, police infiltration would be an "unnecessary intrusion into First Amendment rights and it is illegal for them to attend demonstrations and meetings. Attempts by Detroitists to get a Chicago-style court order have been stalled by Attorney Frank Kelley, who represents the state and Gov. James Blanchard, who is party in the red squad suit. Kelley maintains that such an order is "unnecessary." Wayne County Circuit Judge Lucile Watts, who heard arguments on the proposed order last month, has yet to make a decision.

The need for limits on police spying by law enforcement agencies other than the State Police is also raised by the Michigan cases. Trooper Lapp, for example, testified that Fred Schulz of the Oakland County Sheriff's Department had been with the two State Police at the demonstration and the meeting at the church on Sunday. Other court records show that still another police agent, informant for the Sheriff, was also at the church.

The informant, a 15-year veteran of police investigations, mingled with the crowd, saw that the priest was using cards in his non-violence training and observed the presence of a documentary filmmaker. A few days later Oakland County sheriffs came with a warrant to search the priest's "all rooms, spaces and compartments." St. Vincent de Paul Church." O-

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Above, Williams International protesters make ashes for Ash Wednesday worship by burning their court citations. Below, a protester waits for police to arrest him.

sheriffs also had a microphone hidden on him, a tactic sometimes used in narcotics cases, and he secretly recorded the conversation with the priest and protesters as they served the warrant.

They made the priest, Peter Dougherty, empty his pockets and took all his notes, diary and other things. Then they threatened to search through the possessions of all the other people in the meetings unless he told them where the rest of his belongings were located. Dougherty said, "If I did show them my things, it might be used to implicate others." The priest talked it over with the other protesters for almost an hour while the cops waited. They discussed the search warrant, sang and prayed and in the end the priest gave the police what they wanted. Before they left, the sheriffs also took the guest register book, all the files with in-

formation like the names of the protesters, samples of literature and the filmmaker's film and camera. Dougherty said, "They took my journal. It had thoughts that came to mind. I wrote them down along with the quotes I liked from other people's talks."

Randy Karfonta, an attorney for the protesters, said, "It was totally unnecessary for the police to disturb this public meeting. They had all the information they needed. The only purpose served by the search was to have what the law calls a 'chilling effect' on the right to assemble, so that people will not feel free to go to vigils and meetings in the future."

Lt. Henry Hansen, a sheriff who requested the warrant for L. Brooks Patterson, the Oakland County prosecutor, did not dispute the effect of such a search. "If you're doing something that's illegal," he said, "then you should be intimidated."

The day after the raid on the church, Friday, December 2, the police struck again. This time their target was Jean Hutchison, a religious pacifist and preacher from Greenham, England. Hutchison had participated in the women's peace camp and protest against placement of the cruise missile in England. She had shown a film of the Greenham demonstration during a speech she gave at St. Vincent's, a fact duly noted by the informant who also attended the meeting.

"Some supporters heard my name coming over the police walkie-talkie with instructions to arrest me," Hutchison said, describing her arrest. "We went through a fumbling charade of trying to hide me in the crowd and change my coat. A young Quaker tried to help me by taking me to his car, but I was grabbed from behind and told I was under arrest for trespass. I said I had not trespassed, but they took us both." Hutchison was the only person not taking part in the civil

disobedience and blocking Williams' driveway who was charged with conspiracy.

The severity of the criminal charges leveled against the protesters is also seen as part of the pattern of gross intimidation by county prosecutor Patterson. In previous demonstrations of civil disobedience at Williams, peace activists would get charged with trespass and get a maximum of 30 days in jail for violating a court injunction. Even where they were convicted of the trespass charge, they would not be required to serve any more time in jail.

This time Patterson's office has upped the ante. In an obvious attempt to intimidate would-be protesters and to discourage more demonstrations, he charged the pacifists with nine separate criminal counts including: trespass, conspiracy to trespass, disturbing the peace, conspiracy to disturb the peace, obstructing the entrance to a place of employment, conspiracy to obstruct the entrance to a place of employment, failure to comply with a police order, trespass, refusing to depart and littering.

As in previous cases, protesters were sentenced to 30 days for violating the civil injunction. And, although all of them have served some of the time and been released early, they now face the laundry list of criminal charges with maximum penalties of one year in jail.

Patterson defends his actions, maintaining that he could have charged them with a felony punishable by five years, and furthermore, to allow people to deliberately disobey the law is to "advocate anarchy." The charges, however, are clearly out of proportion to the act. Civil disobedience at Williams typically consisted of the people walking into the main driveway, symbolically attempting to block traffic for a few moments and promptly being carried away by a waiting army of police.



In addition, the charges of obstructing the entrance of a place of employment is designed for labor disputes and strikes and has no known history of being applied to this kind of a demonstration. Conspiracy has a rather sordid history in the law and has been used primarily to silence people who advocate social change. Patterson's decision to use the conspiracy and other charges drew fire from Paul Fealk, chairman of the Oakland County American Civil Liberties Union. "It smacks of a calculated decision to repress political and social expression because it treats this group of trespassers differently from other trespassers in other non-political situations," said Fealk.

The ACLU, National Lawyers Guild and others have attacked Patterson for the infiltration of peace vigils, the arrest of Jean Hutchison and the raid on the church in addition to the complaint of overcharging. The *Detroit Free Press*, in addition, has joined the State Bar Civil Liberties Committee in labeling Patterson's actions "vindictive reaction and overkill," adding, "The Courts, we hope, will redress that."

Indeed, there are those in the sheriff's office who predict that in the end, even if the demonstrators are convicted of the most serious of these charges, they will most likely get time served, that is, less than 30 days. The judges may simply ignore Patterson's attempt to intimidate through overcharging and continue to give these and future protesters a maximum of 30 days in jail as if they had been convicted of trespass. Oakland county taxpayers may have to pay a great deal for the time and expense of attorneys, sheriffs, judges, clerks, secretaries and others necessary to prove these cases (but Oakland is a rich county—the second richest in America). Future protesters may still be intimidated by informants and nighttime raids on churches, but if the jail sentences do not change, the protests will probably continue to grow and Patterson will come off looking like a swaggering bully who is incapable of punishing what he perceives as a growing tide of would-be anarchists.

It is consistent with his strategy, therefore, that he took the highly unusual step of trying to disqualify some of the Walled Lake judges now scheduled to try the cases and move them to Pontiac where the court is less independent and more easily pressured. Patterson branded one of the Walled Lake judges as "having a negative attitude," hostile toward the state and prejudiced in favor of the protesters. Judge Martin Boyle was singled out as being particularly prejudiced because he belongs to a group called Lawyers Alliance for Nuclear Arms Control.

In a charge that drips with '50s McCarthyism, Patterson attacked Boyle and the Lawyers Alliance because "it desires to open lines of communication on the nuclear weapons issues with 'Lawyers of the Soviet Union' and its allies." The prosecutor was also incensed at Boyle's reference to the pacifists, many of whom are nuns, priests and ministers, as "people of the peace" who have been known to sing "songs of peace." All attempts to disqualify the judges have so far been denied.

In some respects Patterson is an easy target. He is for the death penalty, against school busing for integration and perceives the cruise missile as "a vital part of this country's defense armament." Like Richard Nixon or J. Edgar Hoover, he is too easily seen as the enemy. As Father Dougherty explained, "We don't want people to put all their energies into the court stuff, but rather at the gates of Williams International. Organize an event. A prayer service. Civil disobedience, that sort of thing. The court is only a part of what is going on."

Tax deductible contributions for the Williams legal defense fund can be made to: Fund for Equal Justice, c/o 4517 Commonwealth, Detroit, MI 48208. The Covenant for Peace in Detroit can be contacted at (313) 822-2055.

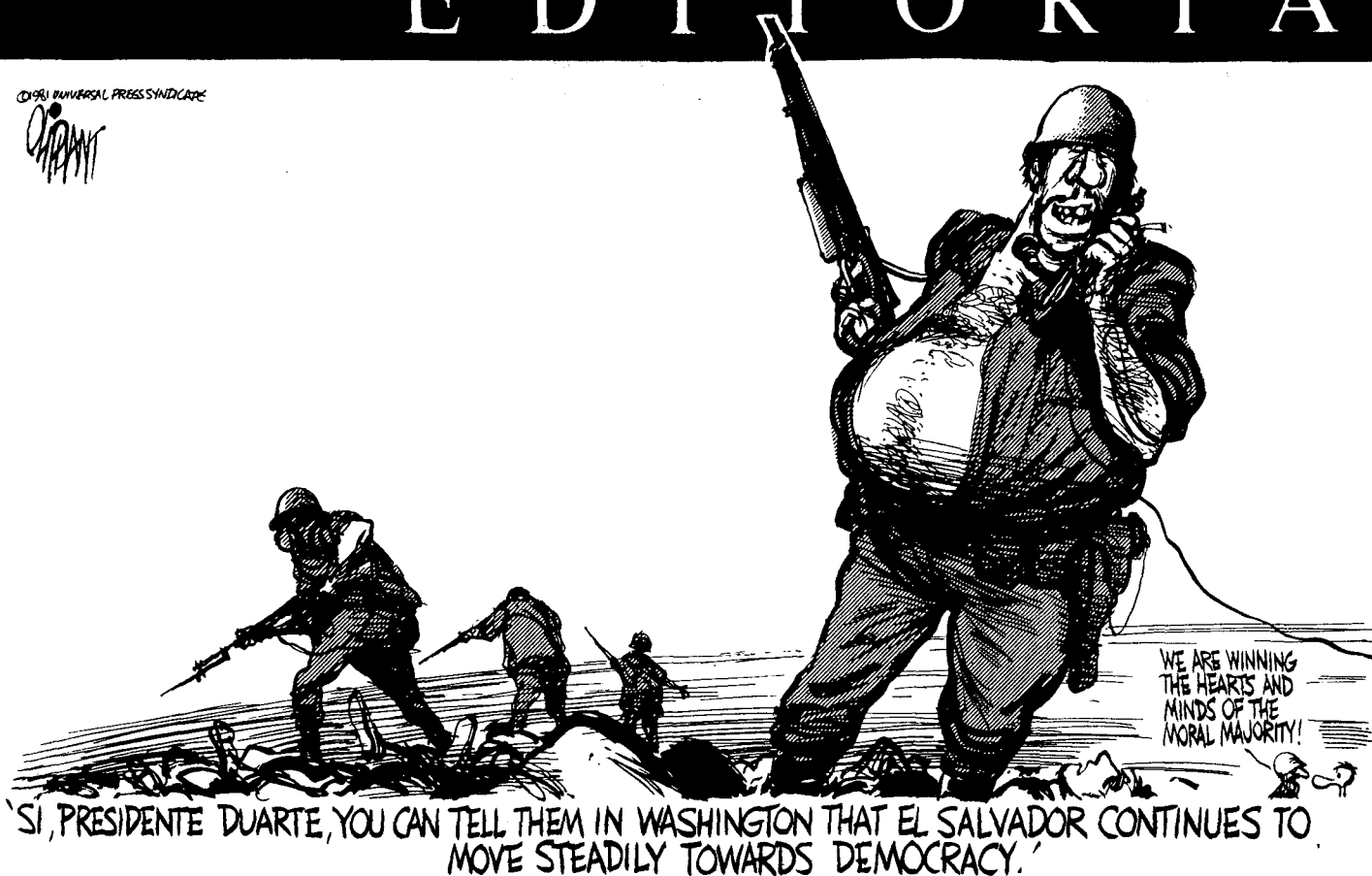
George Corsetti is a Detroit attorney and filmmaker (POLETOWN LIVES!).

RED SCARE REVISITED

EDITORIAL

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C. P. RAY



What makes them enemies?

On May 8, after the election in El Salvador, President Reagan hailed the results, saying that the voters of that country were "heroes of democracy... fighting for freedom just as our forefathers did." And he warned of the grim consequences if the United States did not continue to help the people of Central America fight for freedom.

Two days later, in a nationally televised speech, Reagan pulled out all the stops in his Cold War revivalism. First, he quoted a speech President Harry S. Truman made in 1947 to gain support for a takeover of an exhausted Britain's imperial role in Greece and Turkey. Next, Reagan quoted a speech President John F. Kennedy made during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis—an event that brought us to the brink of nuclear war—claiming that the United States is "in the midst of a long twilight struggle to defend freedom in the world."

Then, reiterating the findings of the widely discredited 1981 State Department "White Paper," the president insisted that the Salvadoran revolution was the result of Soviet and Cuban intervention, and that the rebels owed their survival to

arms shipments from the Soviets through Cuba and then through Nicaragua. The region, which he said is moving toward democracy with the benevolent cooperation of the United States, is being threatened by the Evil Empire. "If the Soviet Union can aid and abet subversion in our hemisphere," Reagan argued, "then the U.S. has a legal right and a moral duty to help resist it." And not only that, but since Nicaragua is guilty of aggression against El Salvador, the U.S. is legally—and morally—right in doing what the rest of the world considers to be illegal—and immoral.

In short, Reagan's speech reiterated the failed and largely discredited policies of the Cold War. It also ignored the realities of Central America, particularly the role the U.S. has played there throughout this century. And it drew on nostalgia, first for a time when the United States was the inspiration for democratic movements throughout the world and then for a time when it still had the power to impose its will at a relatively low cost.

Reagan's inflexibility, his clinging to failed and discredited policies, is as frightening as his reiteration of distor-

tions, half-truths and outright lies. But in some ways the response of the Democratic Party representatives interviewed immediately after Reagan's speech by Dan Rather on CBS was more disturbing. The good sign is that they all were critical of Reagan's exclusively military proposals and of his ignoring the economic conditions and lack of democracy in El Salvador as reasons for the civil war now in progress.

But the bad sign was the failure—even of Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-CT)—to challenge Reagan's underlying premises or to look at the historical role of the United States in Central America. The idea that a basic change in the principles governing our relations with Latin American nations is needed—that past and present American policies are responsible for the anti-American character of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and of the insurrection in El Salvador—was totally absent, not only from the speech, but also from the post-speech discussion. It has also been almost totally absent from the public debate in the media and in Congress.

Reagan's prevarications.

Yet information that has been readily available in recent months, if not to the public at large then certainly to the media and to Congress members, belies almost everything Reagan asserted in his May 9 speech.

• Contrary to Reagan's claim, a State Department official and the *Wall Street Journal* have acknowledged that the El

Salvador elections were simply a symbolic gesture, designed to please North Americans with a touching faith in balloting, even when it occurs in the midst of a violent revolution and in a country without a tradition of democracy.

• Contrary to Reagan's claims, the 80 percent voter turnout May 6 does not reflect a brave response to "Communist threats" against voting, but fear that if they don't vote, and have their identification cards stamped accordingly, people will be fair game for the right-wing death squads.

• Contrary to Reagan's claims about the Cuban role in El Salvador, the top U.S. official in Havana in 1981 told the State Department that Castro's aid to the revolution had been greatly overestimated and that Castro wanted to negotiate with—not confront—the United States.

• Contrary to Reagan's claims that the "small, violent right wing" in El Salvador "are not a part of the government," and that they have "consistently" been opposed by the U.S., the death squads were organized by the CIA starting in 1963, and many Salvadoran officials, most notably Colonel Nicholas Carranza, director of the Treasury Police, have long been on the CIA payroll. Reagan talks piously about the terrible Sandinistas "publicly humiliating Catholic priests." He neglects to mention that it was the U.S.-organized death squads that assassinated Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero after a public warning from Roberto D'Aubuisson, leader of El Salvador's Constituent Assembly.

The United States' role in establishing the death squads is well documented in an important article by Allan Nairn in the May issue of *The Progressive* that has been ignored by most of the media. In a long interview, Gen. Jose Alberto Medrano, a retired member of the El Salvador army's general staff and a long-time CIA agent, reveals the army's attitude toward dissent and freedom of speech in this country that Reagan says is "struggling valiantly to achieve democracy."

"You discover the communist by the way he talks," Medrano told Nairn. "Generally, he speaks of Yankee imperialism, he speaks against the oligarchy, he speaks against military men. We can spot them easily." And what are the rights of these "Soviet agents"? You see, Medrano explained, "in this revolutionary war, the enemy comes from the people. They don't have the rights of Geneva. They are traitors to the country. What can the troops do? When they find them, they kill them."

The death squads were organized at the time of the Alliance for Progress, an attempt by Kennedy and then Lyndon B. Johnson to reverse the wave of democratic and socialist nationalism in Latin America with a combination of public aid and hidden suppression. But the Alliance ultimately failed because it did nothing to reverse the underlying problem—especially in Central America—which was the domination of those countries by American multinational corporations working with small, brutally oppressive oligarchies of landowners and business owners.

The history of American military intervention in every country of the region, frequently recounted in these pages, by itself refutes Reagan's claim about the role of the Soviet Union and Cuba in El Salvador's revolution. But Reagan can no longer simply assert the United States' right to protect its "interests" in these countries. To sell his program he must make up stories about the U.S. defending democracy and appeal to fears about godless Communism.

Times have changed, however. We do not believe that the majority of American people buy Reagan's hard sell, and the opinion polls seem to support our view. The problem now is to get our elected representatives in Congress to stand up more forthrightly in opposition both to Reagan's demands for more military aid and for a return to the tensions and insecurities of the Cold War.

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ON CONTRADICTION

SALIM MUWAKKIL'S ARTICLE, "WHY Jackson won't dump Farrakhan" (ITT, May 2) gives black unity in the face of white racism as the main reason he has not done so.

Either Jackson is building a Rainbow Coalition or he is not. Imagine a Rainbow Coalition of blacks and racists, women and sexists, gays and anti-gay bigots, Jews and anti-Semites, the unemployed and Reagan: it would be a truly magical piece of populism. Whether such contradictions can coalesce and resemble anything progressive is highly dubious. Many liberals and leftists hesitate to criticize Jackson's campaign for fear of being charged with sectarianism or racism. Neither blacks nor whites benefit when we don't speak what's on our minds.

Louis Farrakhan, a minister of the Nation of Islam, is unmistakably progressive in one respect: he is a champion of self-determination for black people. This in itself provides a principled link between himself and Jackson. Farrakhan's opinions about Hitler and his attack on Michael Jackson for being "effeminate" and "sissyfied" are another matter. Combined with Jackson's own remarks about "Hymies," the Jackson campaign now suffers from much

more than bad public relations. It suffers from its own political confusion and Jackson's refusal to clarify promptly where he stands.

The theology of the Nation of Islam is sexist and anti-gay. Indeed, Farrakhan may be said to be the Jerry Falwell of black nationalism. Farrakhan also claims that blacks are Allah's Chosen People. The notion of a Chosen People has a sad history, whether taken up by "Aryan" demagogues, by fundamentalist Jews, by Black Muslims or by Moral Majoritarians. Is it conceivable that Jesse Jackson could distance himself from such ideological debris, while still maintaining a clear but careful political alliance with Farrakhan?

My lover and I are gay white socialists. My lover's background is Jewish, mine is Christian, and we're both born-again atheists. We voted for Jackson in the primary and are wondering whether we made a mistake.

—Scott Tucker
Philadelphia

BUNKMATES?

"BLACK AND WHITE TOGETHER, Bright and left together...deep in my heart, I do believe, we shall overcome some day."

Wasn't that a time? Now that day is closer than ever because Jesse Jackson

LETTERS

In These Times is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

has seen the wisdom of Jesse Helms. He has staked out positions on the Holocaust, Jews and Israel which the North Carolina senator had long considered the sole property of the right and the white. After years of needless contention, in one fell swoop, Rev. Jackson has succeeded in uniting left and right, black and white (and right and wrong) by preaching a common gospel all of us can relate to: anti-Semitism.

Bigotry sure does make strange bedfellows.

—Jack Forman
San Diego, Calif.

"broads" as Virginia Woolf and Ann Beattie.

Speaking of which, Wolff also ought to be aware that the "innocuous contemporary novelty," "Tweedle Dee," which Elvis sings on *The First Live Recordings*, only became either innocuous or a novelty when Teresa Brewer swiped it from the great R&B singer La Vern Baker. It's one thing for the hustlers who packaged the Presley record to be unaware of this fact, but it's another thing for your reviewer to regurgitate the liner note so avidly.

—Dave Marsh
Rock & Roll Confidential
New York

KEEN

IT IS STRANGE INDEED THAT YOUR senior editor is in complete disagreement with your own editorial (ITT, April 18). Judis is lost in a morass of minutiae and cannot see the forest for the trees.

His comparison of Jackson with Booker T. Washington, an establishment black, is ridiculous. Judis should take a lesson from Dorothy Healey who fully supports Jackson and shows keen political insight.

Judis' support for a secondary primary run-off is inexcusable. He should know that Jackson has filed a lawsuit in Mississippi federal court challenging the legality of the run-off system in 10 Southern states under the Voting Rights Act.

The key issue is voter registration to enfranchise millions to democratize the election process. This means radically restructuring American politics in what lies beyond 1984 to include the excluded.

Let us hope that over the horizon a new day is dawning for America.

—Morris Berkow
Los Angeles

RESTART

PLEASE GET MY SUBSCRIPTION GOING again. Without magazines and newspapers like *In These Times*, *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, *Dissent*, *Dollars and Sense*, *Mother Jones* and the *D.S.A. Newsletter* (I have subscribed to them all at one time or another, but I have settled on *In These Times* for more reasons than one—not the least of which is I can't afford them all. But more importantly, *In These Times* covers more labor news [I'm blue collar] and more frequent reporting on Central and South American developments, all with talent, tact, intelligence and objectivity.) I am left with only the snow-job of my daily newspaper. You know how it is: once you have read the truth, you can't settle for less.

—Larry H. Brown
Stockton, Calif.

HILL PEOPLE

CARLO WOLFF ISN'T ESPECIALLY ACCURATE when he writes (ITT, May 2) that Elvis Presley's early music resulted only from the "intersection of blues and hillbilly music." But his choice of terms is actively offensive. "Hillbilly" music was an industry term that ceased to be used, in favor of the more descriptive and less pejorative "country" or "country and western," about the time that "race music" became "rhythm and blues."

But even if that weren't the case, it ill behooves *In These Times* to use such a phrase to describe music or anything else. It's as offensive to me to hear the culture of white Southern working people described as "hillbilly" as it would be to read of novels written by such

FARRAKHAN

SALIM MUWAKKIL WRITES (ITT, MAY 2) that Jesse Jackson supporters claim the press deliberately distorted Louis Farrakhan's statements about Hitler, Michael Jackson and Milton Coleman. Could Muwakkil or your editors provide a brief explanation of how these statements fare better when quoted in a more accurate context? This is not a skeptical question; I just haven't been able to find an account of Farrakhan's side of the story in any publication.

—Matthew Lasar
Oakland, Calif.

Editor's note: Muwakkil was reporting on attitudes toward Jackson in the black community, not on the accuracy of press statements. Unfortunately, we don't have information on that.

HART

DAVID OSBORNE'S DESCRIPTION OF Gary Hart (ITT, March 28) as "the leading Democratic candidate for president" is about as accurate as the rest of the article. The summary of Hart's tax program omits Hart's proposal for a national sales tax, perhaps because this is a regressive, reactionary tax, and does not fit Osborne's description of Hart's tax program as "progressive."

Osborne says "labor leaders and leftists do not choose the party's nominee; the voters do." This is true, but he should have elaborated on this. In states that have open primaries, the Republicans have developed a technique for fouling the Democratic primary. This has happened repeatedly in Mondale's home state of Minnesota, where democratically controlled caucuses and conventions have carefully chosen candidates for various offices, who have been defeated in primaries in which heavily Republican precincts have suddenly gone Democratic. Osborne confirms this notion by admitting that if Hart is not the nominee his supporters will vote for Reagan.

Fredrick S. Gram
St. Paul, Minn.

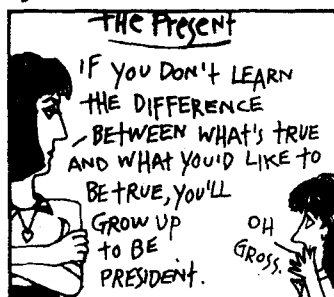
SMART SET

SEVERAL READERS HAVE ASKED FOR the address of the Pretty Smart Company, distributor of *Chords of Fame*, the Phil Ochs biographical film. It is located at 2741 E. 28th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11235; (212)646-1640.

CORRECTION

In Martha Vicinus' review of Peter Gay's book *Education of the Senses*, Michel Foucault and Jeffrey Weeks were described as therapists. They are theorists. We apologize for the error.

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

LEMING'S CORNER

Rupert's headline contest

Here in Chicago this month they're holding the "Rupert Murdoch Rhyming Headline and Tentative Job Offer Contest." Rumor has it that the CIA invented Murdoch as part of a project of converting newspapers into urinals. The contest was being held by the Chicago *Sun-Times* (a recent Murdoch acquisition). Rupert likes to call himself an advocate of a "Free Press." He defines Free Press as any business combine stressing salability, Americanism, fundamentalist Christianity and accuracy—in that order. This year's finalist was young Patrick Connors, who appeared eager and anxious for a tentative job offer.

His first Mur-topic was sex. Rhyme scheme—a,a,b,b. The buzz words were "leather," "nun," "erections" and "pregnant," and the mandatory four-line stanza was to end with a tribute to marriage and family life.

Housewife Strangles Husband—Now She's Sleeping with a Clone Nun Escapes from Convent and Decides to Live Alone Incredible New Device for Men—Erections Last Forever Mom and Dad Find Happiness by Living Alone Together

Connors' first stanza was well within the Murdoch Style Book requirements, but Connors seemed sluggish. Earlier in the day he had confessed to me that his essay on the Homeric line had been laughingly rejected by the *New York Times Book Review* as "maudlin and overly romantic." Could this young contender make a break from the arid world of academic literature to the crassness and cynicism of big-time journalism? Tension mounted as Murdoch announced the next topic, one crucial to the Fourth Estate: dope. Rhyme scheme—a,a,b,a. Headlines were to feature the buzz words "pill," "high," "amphetamine" and "kicks," and the last line had to contain an inoffensive anti-drug slogan. Connors looked stunned.

Thrill Kill Teens on Amphetamines Burn New York for Kicks Test Tube Baby Gets High with Queen as Priest Snorts Crucifix Chickens' Astounding Sex Appeal Based on Wonder Drug Pill-Crazed Dieter Reveals Hope and Dope Don't Mix

It looked as if Connors had it sewed up at that point. Successful contest finalists begin at most Murdoch papers as ashtrays and move quickly to positions as armchairs, if they are diligent. The final Mur-topic was stars. Rhyme scheme—a,a,a,a (the dreaded impossible scheme), and headlines were to contain the buzz words "Burt Reynolds," "Adolf Hitler," "Princess Grace" and "Liz Taylor." The final line had to implicate Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis in a terrorist plot, using poetic license.

Did Hitler Go on Dachau Date after Six-Week Bender? Reagan Dating Taylor after Nancy Kills John Denver Princess Grace Returns from Grave to Haunt Bartender Jackie O. Gets Letter Bomb Marked Return to Sender

"A tremendous job," smiled Murdoch, who then disqualified Connors on the grounds that he had used insufficient poetic license in his final line. Murdoch was whisked from the now-silent arena by his security force, while Connors sat slumped in his corner. But what tremendous heart this kid from Chicago had shown. It was all there: the passion, the power and the utter futility of the Front Page. From Chicago tonight....this has been Warren Leming.

PERSPECTIVES

A dialog for Israeli-Palestinian peace

Mordechai Bar-on, an Israeli leader of the Labor Party and Peace Now, toured with Mohammed Milhelm (right), former mayor of the West Bank town Halhoul.

By Richard Miller

IN A MANHATTAN SYNAGOGUE during Passover, the week celebrating exodus and liberation from Egypt, a Palestinian and an Israeli shared the pulpit to discuss the Middle East. The Palestinian, in a Jewish temple for the first time, talked of his life in the West Bank and of how his five-year-old son wonders if all Israelis are soldiers. The Israeli spoke of his country's growing peace movement and of the fears that still grip many of his people.

In New York and 16 other cities in March and April, these two men spoke to Jewish community groups, Arab-Americans and the general population about the process of peace in the Mideast. The tour was sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and the New Jewish Agenda (NJA).

Mordechai Bar-on, a veteran of the Israeli Defense Forces, a member of the Central Committee of the Labor Party and of Peace Now, was the Israeli speaker. Mohammed Milhelm, mayor of the West Bank town of Halhoul from 1976 until he was deported to Jordan in 1980 by Israeli military authorities, was the initial Palestinian participant. When Milhelm's father became ill, his place was taken by Nafez Nazzal, a history professor at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, now on sabbatical at the University of Pennsylvania.

The participants did not represent any organization. Bar-on stressed that although a member of Peace Now and the Labor Party, he was on the tour as an individual. "We wanted people who would be perceived in the U.S. and the Mideast as coming from the mainstream of their society," said Gail Pressberg, director of AFSC's Middle East Project.

Milhelm, who in 1976 called for the

formation of a democratic, secular state in Palestine, now advocates a two-state solution, the state of Israel and a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. Agreeing, Bar-on said a Palestinian state is "the least dangerous solution for Israel," and Nazzal concurred, saying, "A Palestinian state will be easier to live with than a Palestinian guerrilla movement."

The bottom line for the tour's speakers was that a solution include Israeli recognition of Israel's right to exist within the pre-1967 borders. "But we also wanted people with political differences," Pressberg said. "There is no point in telling Americans we need a real dialog—and then bring people who always agree with each other."

A key difference that Bar-on highlighted on several occasions was the "basic asymmetry" between their positions, with him living in a powerful nation, a regional superpower, while Milhelm has been expelled by Israel from his home and hundreds of thousands of Palestinians live in camps and under an Israeli occupation in the West Bank, which Nazzal described as "an iron boot."

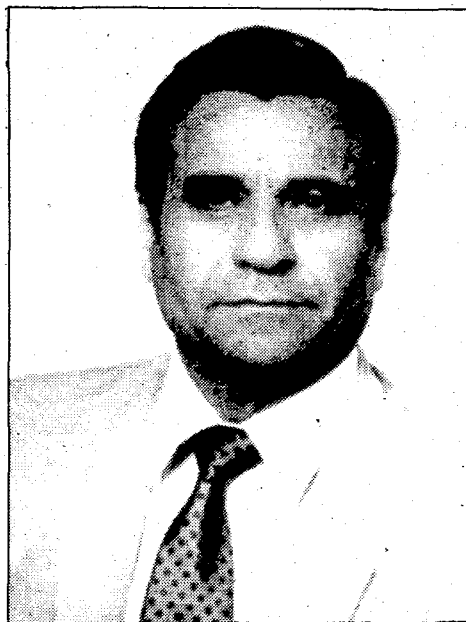
The issue of recognition dominated many of the appearances. "Why don't Arafat and the PLO come out and recognize Israel?" was a question we heard all the time," Pressberg said. "We never once heard the opposite—why doesn't Israel recognize the PLO?" Nazzal said the concept of co-existence is accepted now in the minds of the majority of Palestinians and the PLO leadership. Although they haven't said it clearly yet, there have been signs—the Brezhnev Doctrine, the Fez resolution, and acceptance of UN resolutions. "But it would be unfair to ask the Palestinians—who were expelled and now are occupied—to recognize Israel first. Israel is the superpower; if they can't make a gesture at the peak of their power, when will they?"

But Bar-on argued it would help the process if a clear pronouncement came forth, although he understands the subtleties and difficulties of politics in the Middle East. There is, he said, still a large element of fear—even among Peace Now members—that the PLO "hasn't really had a change of heart on the historical question of Israel's right to exist.... Peace won't be achieved unless the minds of a majority of Israelis are changed on this issue."

For NJA and AFSC the goal was to bring to American audiences the message that there is still time for peace in the Middle East, but that each day without a start of a peace process makes the solution more difficult. Both NJA and AFSC call for a process of mutual recognition and a negotiated settlement. Since both peoples have historical rights to the land, they advocate a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, and some solution to the Palestinian diaspora and security for Israel within its pre-1967 borders.

The tour was designed to create a dialog, particularly in the American Jewish community, by giving people an op-

*For the first time,
a Palestinian spoke
in U.S. synagogues.*



portunity to hear a Palestinian describe life in the occupied West Bank, which Nazzal said is "corrupting and dehumanizing Israel and Jews throughout the world, and destroying the Palestinian community economically, politically, demographically and socially."

"It was an opportunity to provide an opening for creative thought and leadership on the part of the Jewish community," said Joel Gayman, Los Angeles representative of NJA. "The recent Cohen report showed that a majority of American Jews and an even larger percentage of American Jewish leaders, when asked by the American Jewish Congress, believe that Israel should stop the West Bank settlements, offer the Arabs territorial compromise in the West Bank and Gaza in return for credible guarantees of peace and talk with the PLO, if it recognizes Israel and renounces terrorism. This feeling and desire must be communicated, forcibly, to the press and the American and Israeli governments."

But not all of the Jewish community reacted positively. In a few cities opposition to the tour arose from the Jewish Defense League (JDL) and Americans for a Safe Israel. The JDL in Los Angeles said, "To allow murderers of Jewish lives to speak in a place where the Torah is kept is a desecration of God himself.... We must not allow PLO terrorists to desecrate a house of worship." Pressberg

said the opposition from the right-wing JDL and Americans for a Safe Israel made the tour more credible in the eyes of some mainstream Jewish organizations. "They do not put up with that sort of thing.... They may not agree totally with the speakers, but they are not prepared to cut off debate," she said.

In a few cases, however, opposition came from establishment organizations. The March 30 *Cleveland Jewish News* printed two letters denouncing invitations that were extended to Milhelm and Baron by the Workmen's Circle and the Cleveland Board of Rabbis. Rabbi Yaakov Feitman of Young Israel and Bob Flacks of the Cleveland Young Zionist Division of the Zionist Organization of America opposed allowing a Palestinian to speak. They argued that if Israel would not talk with the PLO, then American Jews should not give them a platform in this country. "There is a consensus among national Jewish and Zionist organizations not to sponsor or provide platforms to individuals connected to the PLO or those who are judged as subversive by due process of Israeli law. Milhelm is just such a person," Flacks wrote.

Rabbi Balfour Brickner of the Stephen S. Wise Free Synagogue in New York said the tour was important in giving Americans the possibility of learning of disquiet in Israel at the Likud policies and in hearing a Palestinian moderate's views on a two-state solution. "They do not read about these ideas very often in the U.S. press, Brickner said. "The evening was a success—there was a ring in the hall afterwards, people heard new ideas and points of view."

Pressberg, Gayman and Reena Bernards, co-director of NJA, said the opposition to the tour was minimal compared to similar projects in years past. They see an evolution in the Jewish community, a desire to hear both sides of the issue. The change in attitude was ascribed to several things: the invasion of Lebanon and the massacres in the Palestinian camps, the growth of the Israeli peace camp; and the recognition that the Likud policies are tearing Israel apart, economically and morally. It is now easier for American Jews to criticize Israeli government policies. "The changes in the U.S. mirror what has occurred in Israel," Bernards said. "This tour highlighted the progress we are making."

As elections in Israel approach, many Israelis agree that a labor victory might provide the framework for a peace process to unfold.

Bar-on and Nazzal agreed in New York that prospects do "not exist at the present time," yet there are encouraging signs. Bar-on was scheduled to appear on Israel's most popular talk show upon his return to describe what happened on the tour. Thousands of Americans had a chance to hear courageous people from both camps come forward to explain how things might be changed in the Mideast. A crew from PBS taped most of the tour and a one-hour documentary is scheduled to air in the fall, "reaching a potential audience, not of 10,000 like the tour, but of 10 million," according to filmmaker Steve York.

On several occasions Bar-on referred to the Israelis and Palestinians as "Siamese twins who are locked in a head-on struggle between two national movements. We are locked in the conflict now and we must begin to find a road out of it. We need each other to be able to attain full legitimacy. Palestinians can't have sovereignty without Israel's recognition, and Israel needs the Palestinians to accept Israel's right to exist."

Richard Miller is a member of New Jewish Agenda in New York.

The Unbearable Lightness of Being
By Milan Kundera
Harper and Row, 320 pp., \$15.95

By Paul Skenazy

Rarely do I have the chance to review a book as good as this one. It is a peculiar work stamped with that intelligence and philosophic daring, that wry spirit and aphoristic splendor that are the mark of a Milan Kundera fiction. Whatever its minor problems, whatever my occasional arguments with its ideas, it is a book of great wisdom and compassion.

Kundera's first novel, *The Joke*, was an instant best seller in his native Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1968, just before the Russian invasion ended that country's moves toward liberalization. But he first came to the attention of most American readers through the wonderful "Writers from the Other Europe" series of translations Philip Roth has been editing for Penguin Books, and through the pages of *The New Yorker*, where portions of his most recent works have appeared (the first three of the seven sections of this novel, for example).

Although Kundera is never a polemicist arguing for or against any specific political doctrine,

He doesn't so much create believable characters as develop speculative landscapes in which people like those he writes about might exist.

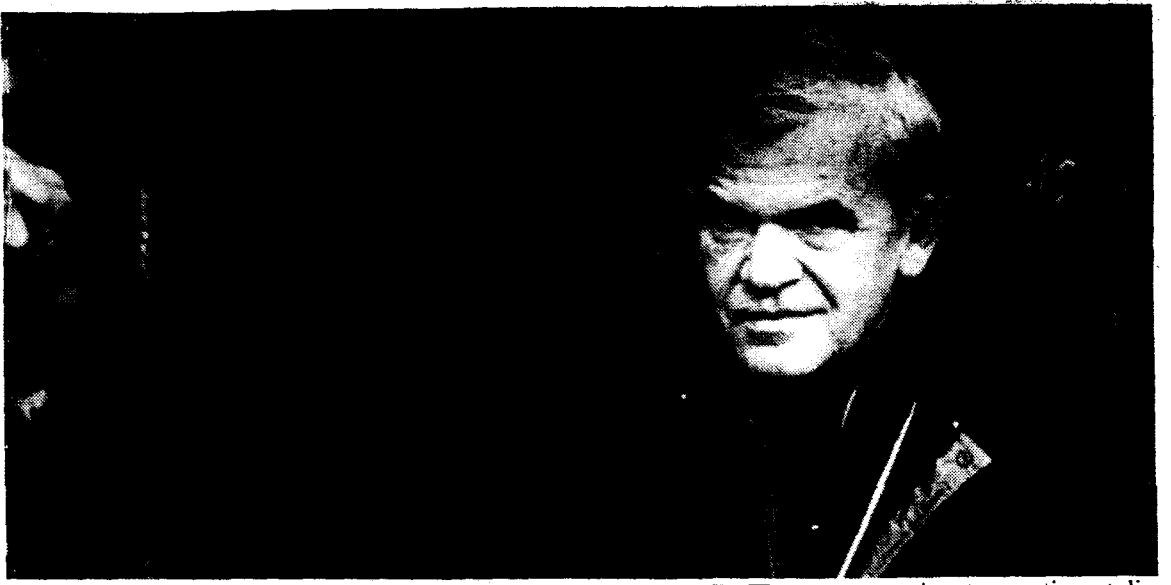
For Kundera, a novel is something between a dream and an essay, a meandering lyrical musing on the events and people he has invented for our entertainment and education.

"I have been thinking about Tomas for many years," he says to introduce the plot, or "now we return to a moment we already know about," he explains after a lengthy digression. For each step forward there are two to the side, each moment served to us smothered in questions.

What plot there is goes something like this: Tomas, a noted Czech surgeon living in Prague and given to affairs with women, meets and soon falls in love with Tereza, a young woman of the provinces with an impulsive, romantic attachment to Beethoven and books and an equally passionate desire to escape from her mother. The lovers start living together; later they are married. They get a dog named Karenin. Happy by day but overcome each night by jealousy over Tomas' philandering, Tereza dreams out her rage and terror in a series of death fantasies suggesting her passivity before Tomas' womanizing. Yet she remains loyal, and he remains dedicated if unfaithful.

Meanwhile, Tereza becomes a photographer, memorializing the fight of the Czechs against the Russian troops during the invasion. The couple leave Prague briefly after the invasion, hoping to settle in Geneva, but Tereza's unhappiness in exile quickly brings them home. Tomas loses his medical position through political pressures and becomes a window washer. He chooses both not to renounce his earlier pre-purge political comments and not to sign petitions of protest against the invading forces. He continues to sleep with other women.

Tereza finds work in a bar, has a brief sexual encounter, and then turns paranoid with fear of



FICTION

Kundera's new radiant creation

the state police. She continues her terrified dreams. The two move to a collective farm in the country. Karenin grows old, develops cancer.

Interwoven with their stories are the trials and travels of Sabina, an artist and one of Tomas' lovers who becomes a permanent Czech exile, and Franz, a music professor Sabina is involved with in Geneva. As Tereza's life is dominated by patterns of loyalty, Sabina's is controlled by her need to betray.

Franz can feel only guilt for the pleasures and privilege of his Swiss citizenship that allows him to indulge in music studies. He even projects a political significance into Sabina's exile she herself never feels. He leaves his wife for his Czech lover. In turn, she leaves him for his pain and moves to Paris. He finds his way to a perverse kind of fulfillment during a protest march in Thailand to the Cambodian border, while she eventually achieves some commercial success in America.

This brief on the characters can only suggest the curious disjunctions, surprises and strange twists of fate Kundera details. We receive events from him in patches that are sewn fragilely together by speculation.

Kundera has said that "the novelist teaches the reader to comprehend the world as a question." He aims to challenge the authority of our commonplaces through his tales by illuminating the paradoxes he finds characteristic of life at this particular historical moment. The title of the novel refers to how the transitory nature of experience—the lightness of being—produces a horrifying, unbearable relativism: if events occur only once, how can we know what they signify, how can we learn to choose with authority, how can we interpret experience or develop defensible moral codes?

Confronted by such dilemmas, the imaginative novelist must reinvent the world, beginning with the word. So, for example, Kundera interrupts the action with comments on etymologies and a brief dictionary of misunderstood terms. He inverts logic, subverts expectations and surprises us with discourses on everything from the erotic nature of bowler hats to human excrement, Stalin's son and myths of divine creation.

Kundera's own political, moral, aesthetic and philosophical stances are not easily defined. The issues he raises as central to a country like Czechoslovakia that has seen its culture eradicated—threats to privacy, the terror and memory of invasion and betrayal, programmatic forms of cultural amnesia—are also threats to his individual characters in their personal relations. The public and the private realms bleed together. It is the psychology of guardedness in Prague, not the tanks, that he discusses, as well as the constant need to retain nonbelief in others and the literal demoralization that occurs when the assumptions and strictures that support ethical traditions are deliberately and systematically undermined.

But on the whole, he devotes more attention to the dangers of *kitsch* than to the consequences of political destruction. His enemy is our romantic mawkishness—the way we are controlled by "fantasies, images, words and archetypes" fed us by our belief systems, whether political, religious or interpersonal. It be-

comes easier to sentimentalize than to imagine, distinguish, feel or choose. His weapon against such unthinking piety is his curiosity and associative range. His own tentative faith, such as it is, rests on discovered moments of beauty and perception, unsolicited acts of kindness.

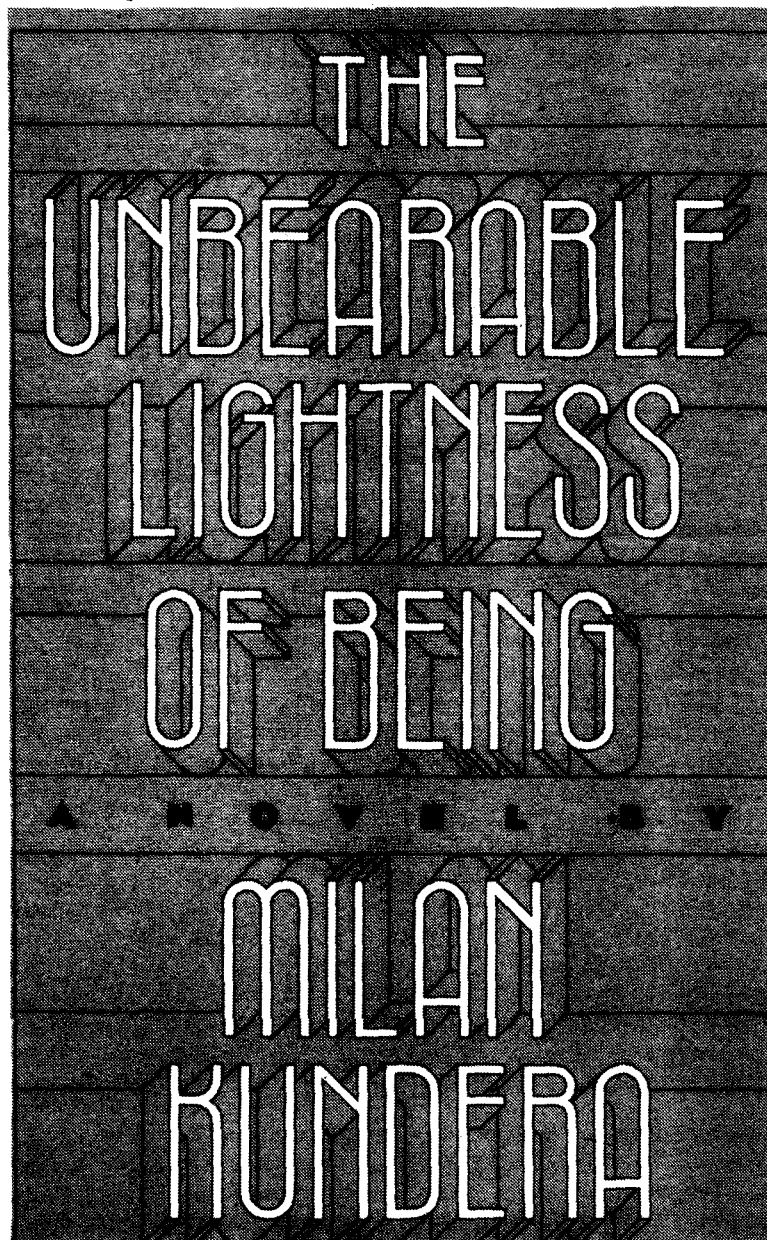
Amid the upheavals and betrayals, people get by and remain loyal, are joyful and feel guilty when cruel. Sometimes they even seem to learn something. For want of a better term, Kundera might be called a suspicionist: the kind of deeply patriotic, darkly brooding, semi-committed partisan who suspects the language of any proclamation as a trap to continued thought and renewal that is built into the structure of citizenship, love and all other ties that bind.

If there is a redemptive theme in the novel, it is the possibility for discovery provided by contemplating various forms of repetition: Nietzsche's idea of "eternal return" (with which the book begins) that belies our nostalgia for the past and so its authority to proscribe our fates; the round of habits and daily devotions we expend on animals, land and other people (with which the book ends) that stabilize our lives, demonstrate our love and affirm our continued ability to maintain a hold on the proximate environment; and the recycling of idea and memory in the imagination (the book's method) that helps us shuffle the deck of time and circumstances into new and meaningful combinations.

There are some obvious limits built into Kundera's method of writing. There is something slightly chilling in Kundera's pursuit of idea, something almost condescending—albeit tenderly condescending—in his appropriation of these lives to his purpose. Also, the equation of private and public has its limits. There is something historically distorting in talk of the "concentration camp" of a woman's childhood, however psychologically true or metaphorically effective the image might be.

But in the end, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* is a complex, radiant creation. In the superb translation by Michael Henry Heim (who seems well on his way to acquiring the same significance as a force in the dissemination of Kundera's work as Gregory Rabassa has had through his translations of Gabriel Garcia Marquez), the prose is lean and direct, the sentences supple in implication while declarative in form. It is the kind of challenging text that can be comprehended but not entirely absorbed in an initial reading, that takes on an afterlife in the mind—the kind that helps rewrite the shape of fictions to come.

Paul Skenazy teaches literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz.



LIFE IN THE U.S.

MONTHLY REVIEW

35 years for granddaddy of socialist magazines

By Joan Walsh

NEW YORK

The U.S. in 1949 would seem to have been an inauspicious setting to launch a socialist magazine and call it that. Where the American left had found reinforcement of its ideas and relevance for its programs in the New Deal and during the U.S.-Soviet alliance of World War II, the post-war years saw its virtual obliteration from without and within. Yet that was the rubble that spawned *Monthly Review* as "an independent socialist magazine."

Founded by economists Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy 35 years ago this month, *Monthly Review* arrived on the political scene in time to chart the purging of Communists and other left elements from the CIO and the Truman administration, the demise of Henry A. Wallace's Progressive Party—and the shattering of the coalition that formed it—the unprecedented Cold War mili-

tary buildup and the rise of Joe McCarthy, whose crusade against the domestic left now seems like overkill.

MR fought the chaos with reasonable analysis and all the optimism that could be mustered. Its early issues scanned the international horizon for socialist prospects abroad, and featured regular "Why Socialism" articles by prominent leftists like Albert Einstein, Corliss Lamont, Scott Nearing and F.O. Matthiessen. (Matthiessen provided the initial funds to launch *MR*.) Huberman wrote regularly on basic socialist principles in the clear, but not simplistic style that had made his *Man's Worldly Goods*—an economic history—a worldwide classic (currently being translated into Marathi, an Indian language.)

MR also became a haven for embattled leftists of the '50s, many of whom—like economist Paul Baran, who would play a central role in the magazine—were forced to write under pseudonyms. The magazine turned its pages over to the fight against the

House Unamerican Activities Committee; printing the HUAC testimony of Huberman, Harvey O'Connor and Corliss Lamont, and tracing what would emerge as the legal challenge to the committee's methods on First Amendment grounds.

But as it abetted the legal and political struggle against McCarthyism and the Cold War, *MR* also grappled with their economic and ideological implications. Was it fascism? Maybe. A June 1953 "Review of the Month" saw the country "clearly headed for fascism" if current trends continued, and saw the red scare as intended to "frighten a democratic country into supporting a global policy of counterrevolutionary imperialism." It analyzed McCarthy's base of support as industrialist *parvenus* (the same ilk *MR* would later see behind Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan), but wrongly predicted McCarthy would "capture the GOP without ever meeting any real resistance." The only possible response was "coopera-

tion on the left," and *MR* solicited opinions from a broad range of leftists, never falling into the raging red-baiting or liberal-hating that split left-of-center politics in those years.

To the Third World.

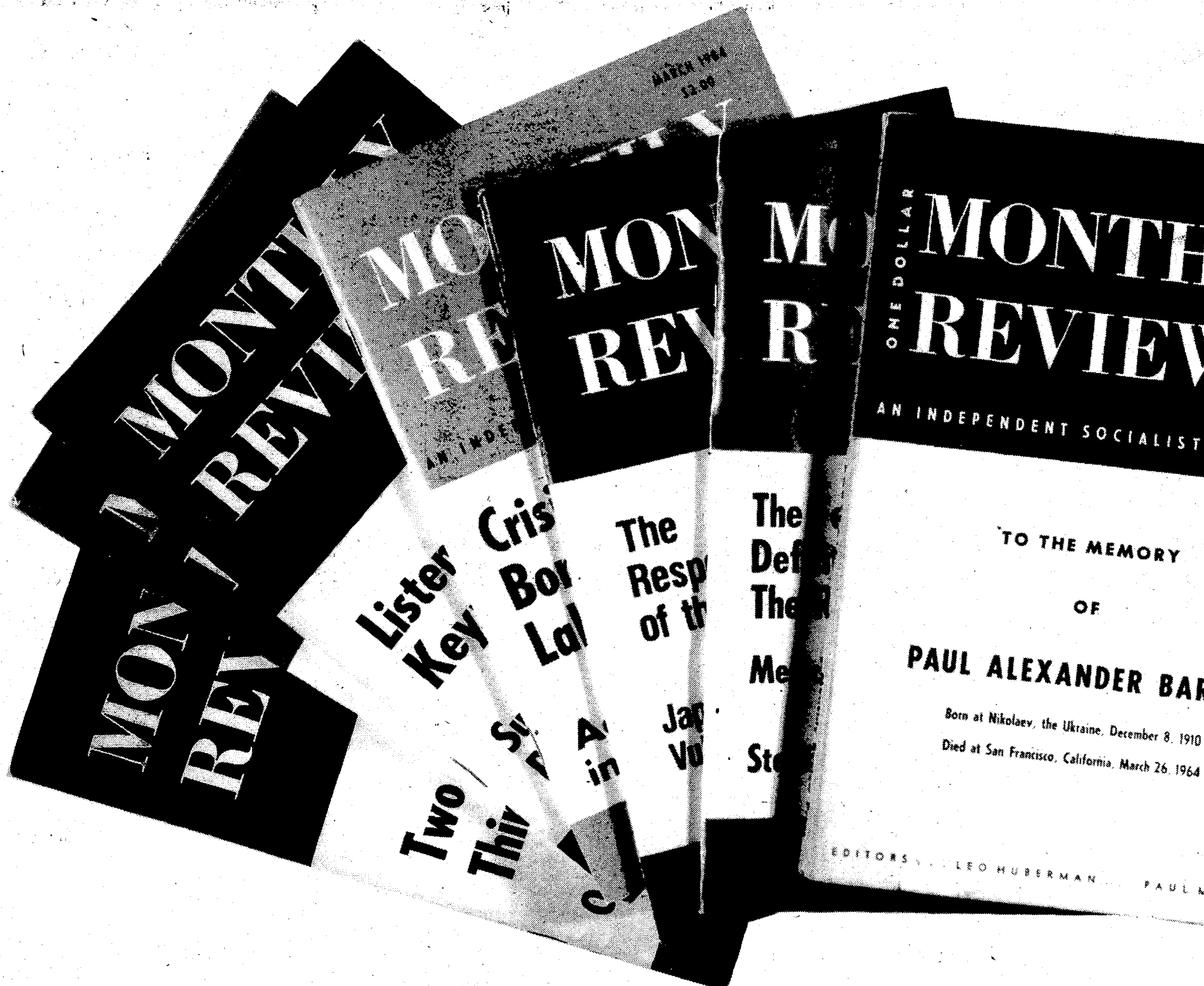
The dim prospects for a domestic left resurgence led most of *MR*'s attention abroad. The nascent independence movements and revolutions in Asia, Africa and Latin America sustained their belief that socialism was the inevitable solution to world capitalism's crisis. "We've always been criticized as 'Third Worldist,'" co-editor Harry Magdoff notes, "for ignoring the working class as the revolutionary agent in advanced capitalism. But the Third World is where revolutionary change is taking place." He and Sweezy agree that *MR*'s most enduring contribution may have been its early attention to developing countries' experiments in political and economic independence.

With prescience, the editors warned in October 1953 that increased American support for France's failing efforts in Vietnam would suck this country into full-fledged war. It also predicted that the 1954 overthrow of Guatemala's left-leaning government set the stage "to split Latin America between the extreme left and extreme right." But if the CIA's role in Guatemala confirmed Huberman and Sweezy's pessimism about the power of the American empire, the Cuban revolution in 1959 inspired their optimism that it was not invincible.

Charting the *Fidelistas'* progress—and U.S. efforts to subvert it—took center stage in



Monthly Review from '60 to '63. Sweezy, Huberman and Baran visited Cuba in October 1960, the month Castro nationalized banks, most key industry and urban real estate, and the U.S. responded with its trade embargo. Huberman's recommendations upon his return was that the U.S.





In 1960, *MONTHLY REVIEW* editors Sweezy (left) and Huberman (right) visited Cuba with economist Paul Baran.

negotiate directly with Castro, lend Cuba the money to buy the property it confiscated, return the base at Guantanamo and restore full trade. Instead Kennedy launched the Bay of Pigs.

MR took pains to distinguish *Fidelismo* from Communism for its readers, but concluded that

whether or not it was Communist was irrelevant: it worked. The editors turned over pages to Castro and Che Guevara to expound on theories behind revolution in Latin America, but when the country's economic and political stagnation became apparent, they were willing to put some of the blame on the revolutionary leadership for jumping into nationalization too quickly—but most of the onus rested on U.S. economic and military interference.

Developments in China also enthralled *MR*'s editors, especially as the Soviet Union paled as a model of socialist revolution and government. The magazine's perspective on the Soviets' shortcomings had always been generous, blaming most of them on the economic and military attacks suffered by history's first socialist revolution. Even Baran, who was expelled from the Soviet Union in 1935, wouldn't publicly criticize its leadership. He defended Stalin's rigid methods of collectivization and military policies.

But where the magazine's commemoration of the Bolshevik Revolution's 40th anniversary (1957) stressed the Soviets' amazing post-war economic recovery and defended much of Stalin's program as economic and strategic necessity, the 50th anniversary found *MR* editors and contributors less sanguine. While Sweezy and Huberman still found much to celebrate, their analysis of the country's prospects were more sober. In *MR*'s pages, Staughton Lynd asked "What Went Wrong?" and Harry Braverman concluded, "The revolution has lost its way." He saw in its leaders "little will to move toward socialism now that it's possible."

The Chinese, meanwhile, were moving toward socialism with the Cultural Revolution, which *MR* saw as "the purest kind of Leninism"—what Lenin himself might have done to eradicate class distinctions in the Soviet Union and to attack its bureaucracy had he lived. Maoism for *MR* was an attempt to deal with the remnants of the pre-revolutionary

"exploiting" class, as well as to level the inevitable post-revolution elite. Mao's emphasis on "egalitarianism," Sweezy says, remains a lasting contribution to revolutionary theory.

"Mao understood the necessity of the masses taking an active role, that the party doesn't have all the wisdom in the world," he notes. "Egalitarianism is perhaps more important than democracy, since without egalitarianism democracy is always at risk. And since Mao's death, there's no pretense in China that they're creating egalitarianism." Post Mao-China, Sweezy wrote last year, has made Marxism what it became in the Soviet Union: merely a "ruling ideology." But Mao will outlast his current repudiation by China's rulers, Sweezy predicts: "Mao will be a much greater figure than would seem likely now."

Blacks and the left.

The civil rights and anti-war movement drew *MR* back to the domestic scene in the early '60s. But a belief that colonial people were the motor of world revolution focused most of *MR*'s attention on the black struggle. From the first Greensboro sit-ins they watched civil rights battles asking, "Can racial equality ever be achieved under monopoly capitalism?" Increasingly violent white reaction and black militance convinced them it couldn't.

Current politics would seem to vindicate their belief that American blacks were the left's most natural constituency—from Jesse Jackson to the Congressional Black Caucus, black politicians are most successfully articulating a left critique of the domestic and foreign policy status quo, and lining up blacks behind them. Yet these gains are coming in an arena—the traditional one of American politics—that *MR* never seriously considered.

Seeing blacks as "leaders of the American revolution," they believed nationalist goals were illusory and unattainable, but supported separatist efforts like Conrad Lynn's miniscule all-black Freedom Now party in

1963. As urban riots became more widespread, *MR* analyzed the ghetto as a "liberation front" and saw "guerrilla fighters" coming to attain a quasi-government structure with an ability to hunt out "fifth columns" in the community. SDS's adoption of the Black Panthers' agenda won *MR*'s admiration—before extremism caused the combination to explode like a high school chemistry experiment gone tragically amuck.

But many people who wrote in those years might flinch to see their apocalyptic expectations in print today. *MR*'s lasting contribution to the left is its continuing analysis of 20th-century capitalism, hammered out by Huberman, Sweezy, Baran, Braverman and Harry Magdoff, who joined the magazine as editor after Huberman's death in 1968. From its first issues *MR* predicted that the post-war economic boom, powered by pent-up wartime consumerism, European reconstruction and the imperial military budget, couldn't be sustained (though it prematurely predicted its bust on several occasions).

When the economy exhausted World War II's stimulus, Sweezy and Baran saw continued growth coming to depend on ever-larger monopoly enterprises and on empires in which they could operate—empires that inevitably shackled and distorted the developing world's economy. And they monitored the increasing importance of the finance industry in moving capitalism out of its inevitable periods of stagnation, but predicted that expanded consumer, industrial, government and Third World debt would create new crises.

The books that preserved that economic analysis beyond the monthly magazine—Baran's *Political Economy of Growth*, his and Sweezy's *Monopoly Capital*, Magdoff's *Age of Imperialism*, to name just a few—were the foundation of Monthly Review Press, established in 1952 to publish I.F. Stone's *Hidden History of the Korean War* when no one else would. In addition to publishing the work of *MR* contributors and editors, the press kept in print left classics from Marx to Mao and became an outlet for international scholarship on the developing world. Still, until Braverman's arrival from Grove Press in 1969, book publishing was just a sideline to the magazine; Braverman's work made the press an institution in its own right.

Surviving the '80s.

If the political chaos of the '80s hasn't shaken the magazine's conviction that socialism is inevitable, it has shown that *MR*'s survival is not. Compared with most political publishing ventures, *MR* has shown little interest in promotion and fundraising. (The reluctance is partly lack of money, partly squeamishness about "selling socialism.") Supported by its Associates and 10,000 or so subscribers, the magazine has been mostly self-sustaining on a modest budget, but the press—the costlier operation—has been hurt by recent education cutbacks, since colleges are its chief market.

In spring 1983 the foundation hit an unprecedented financial crisis and an emergency appeal to supporters brought in \$150,000. The brush with extinction en-

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couraged more aggressive promotion, fundraising and business management, says foundation director and *MR* Press editor Susan Lowes. The addition of the New Feminist Library is opening up new topics and new markets for the press, and plans for a direct mail magazine subscription drive are in the works. A symbol of the times is the business computer that sits in the middle of the office, bought with contributions given in lieu of gifts on the occasion of Harry and Bea Magdoff's 50th wedding anniversary.

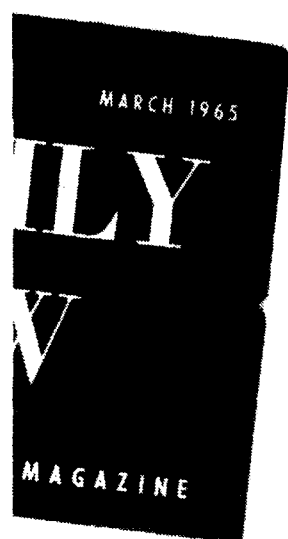
The magazine's agenda is also evolving. The summer will bring a special issue on the religious left, whose increasing importance, Sweezy believes, is evident from Nicaragua to black American churches. And while it was 20 years before *MR* ran an article on women ("The Political Economy of Women's Liberation" appeared in June 1969), feminism gets better treatment these days (perhaps because women have come to play crucial roles in day-to-day *MR* operations).

And electoral politics, always the line that divides the "sectarians" from the "social democrats" in left infighting, has come in for new analysis as well. Where a 1968 editorial called it "ridiculous, degrading and self-defeating for socialists to have any truck with" that year's presidential election, in 1984 the importance of defeating Ronald Reagan has led the editors to new interest in the electoral arena. Sweezy attributes that to a belief that "it will be a long period before there's a revolution in an advanced capitalist country—and by long period, I mean decades,

**MONTHLY
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height of the
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From the
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even generations. Meanwhile, we have to do what we can to prevent the Reagans and Thatchers from taking over and destroying our opportunities. We believe the Reagan administration is the functional equivalent of fascism, and we've never said that about a president before."

But, as always, the importance of the Third World as the source of socialist change is paramount. "Our job here is not to make revolution, but to keep our ruling classes from crushing revolutionary efforts in the Third World," Sweezy says. "That's a big job."



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

MEDIA

Broadcasters examine Central America news

By Rachel Kranz

Recent polls show that most U.S. citizens rely on television for information about foreign affairs. Yet the person who depended exclusively on network coverage of the recent El Salvador elections would have missed much. Such a viewer might not have known that voting in those elections was mandatory, that Salvadorans saw soldiers roust their neighbors out of their homes that morning and accuse them of being guerrillas, or that 40,000 Salvadorans had already been killed by government and death-squad forces.

In the words of exiled Chilean author Ariel Dorfman, they would not have understood that it was "as though the first U.S. elections had been held with Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and Samuel Adams killed—and only James Madison left alive."

What does broadcast journalism teach us about Central America, and what role does the U.S. government play in shaping those lessons? These were the topics of "Media Coverage in Central America," a panel convened before an audience of 350 media workers, independent producers, students and others in New York City on April 25.

Sponsored by Critical Focus, a New York-based group of journalists and media professionals, the panel offered a reminder of the way Central American issues are distorted in the U.S. broadcast media. "At this point, more than any other during the Reagan administration, Central America has become a generalized topic of debate," said Michael Massing, panel moderator and contributing editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*. U.S. Information Agency (USIA) senior policy officer Donald Mathes suggested a rather chilling reason for this: "Foreign policy can't be successful unless we have the support of the American people—we saw that in Vietnam. That's why we work with...and try to influence the American press."

Despite such pressures, panelist Christine Weicher has produced some of the best network coverage on El Salvador. Formerly an associate producer with CBS Evening News, now with *60 Minutes*, Weicher was responsible for last spring's groundbreaking news report comparing El Salvador to Vietnam. Her piece, shown at the panel, included descriptions of U.S. "pacification programs," discussed the reasons for U.S. policy failures and suggested that internal, not external factors were behind the war. The piece was unusual for network reporting: it offered criticism and analysis and attempted to put issues into an historical perspective.

But Weicher's work also sug-

gested the limits of network news conventions. It relied on a rapid-fire, often bewildering succession of images and brief quotes, shuttling in classic network style between "the government says" and "the critics say." Viewers who knew little about El Salvador probably learned that U.S. policy has problems there, as in Vietnam. But they may also have gotten the sense that Latin America is confusing. Weicher herself said that the report was "less about the Salvadoran civil war on its own merits and more about U.S. policy"—a slant that marks almost all U.S. media coverage of foreign affairs.

Technical limits restricted Weicher as well. She had three weeks in the field and three weeks to edit, unusually long for the networks but far short of the norm for independent producers. Weicher's boss simply told her to

"go down to Central America... and figure out what is going on." Media analyst Jack Spence commented later that network news isn't limited so much by time as by repetition. "If they'd just stop repeating, they could get into more depth."

Panelist Deborah Shaffer, who has worked for the networks and as an independent, praised network efforts like Weicher's but thought that most commercial coverage is dominated by "pseudo-objectivity." For months, she said, networks reported without comment Reagan's charges of Soviet-Cuban designs on the Grenadan air strip. Yet when the Reagan administration asked Congress for money to complete the runway, not a single network mentioned the inconsistency.

Jack Spence took the criticism further, claiming that the government sets the news agenda on

Central America. A professor at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, Spence pointed out the "tremendous platform" given administration figures, whose every utterance is considered newsworthy, no matter how inaccurate or how often repeated. Administration charges of arms shipments from Nicaragua—though based entirely on a single questionable photograph—have shaped all discussion on El Salvador. Even those who disagree are forced to use their air time to respond to the charges.

On the other hand, Spence said, El Salvador's "left," "right" and "center" are almost never reported on in their own terms. What does the left want? How did Roberto D'Aubuisson's ARENA party begin? Just what are those "reforms" Christian Democratic leader Napoleon Duarte is always talking about? The political actors are presented purely in terms of their effect on U.S. policy—the left as threat, the right as embarrassment, the center as hope.

USIA Officer Mathes also thought that the press didn't cover issues with enough complexity. Not surprisingly, he wanted more complete coverage of the Salvadoran junta's land and banking reforms and more attention to guerrilla violence. "There is a lot of horrorbleness" in the El Salvador war, Mathes said, "but we often have the feeling in the government that only one side of it gets shown."

Ariel Dorfman spoke last, a position he requested because "it symbolizes what generally happens in the media. The victims are last—they're left outside." "To truly illustrate what happens with our people," he continued, "I should be silent!" Dorfman claimed that for the most part, the U.S. media systematically silences Latin Americans, either by speaking for them literally, through voice-overs, or by not considering them reliable. "On January 23, the Nicaraguans announced that the CIA was mining their harbor. Why wasn't that stated on prime-time news? Because what they say is not considered credible. It is not considered true."

One result of such reporting, Dorfman said, is to leave U.S. viewers ill-equipped to understand world events. "Nobody can ever understand how the Vietnamese won, why the Salvadorans fight, how the Nicaraguans got rid of a dictator. If you look at the coverage, it's incomprehensible." The media present political events as though they were natural disasters, El Salvador as a volcano, with "no real reason for being there—it's just erupting!"

Sins of omission.

Confusion produces apathy. All that most viewers can understand, even from seemingly sympathetic coverage, is that "they don't want that to interfere in their lives." Having been given no framework of information, no tools of analysis, Dorfman argued, U.S. viewers are extremely vulnerable to the Cold War belief that we must contain Communism. Even when a broadcast mentions poverty, it translates into "the Reds are coming!"

Dorfman's analysis was reinforced by the screening of several news segments on the Salvadoran elections. The four clips (NBC on the '82 elections; all three networks on the '84 elections) looked remarkably alike, all hammering home the theme of guerrilla violence versus peaceful voting.

"Not the guerrillas but the system got in the way." Images of unsuccessful guerrilla battles gave way to shots of incomplete voter lists, long lines at the polls and one poor voter who had to be shown how to insert his ballot into the box. After the screening, Dorfman searched for words to explain his reaction. "I'm...hurt by this portrait," he said finally. "There is really something of a caricature, a joke, about it."

An independent news clip, a Canadian broadcast and an extraordinary piece on life behind El Salvador rebel lines proved that TV news could be different. The independent production, Pam Cohen's work for the partisan group Comisol, almost reversed network patterns. With about the same length, format and visual style as network news, it showed a couple dragged out of their house, tied up and kicked in the head by soldiers, one of whom pauses to say calmly, "We don't know if they're guerrillas." Significantly, he speaks for himself.

The voice-over narration explains that disappearances are an everyday reality in El Salvador, offering a few statistics to supplement the context of the opening shot. Interviews with citizens riding to the elections reveal that you go to jail if you don't vote because the police will think you're a guerrilla. "They want to scare you so you'll vote for their candidate," says one old

Salvadorans are able to understand and explain the situation.

woman. Far from being inept officials or bumbling voters, these Salvadorans are shrewd, savvy, able to understand and explain their situation.

In discussion after the showing, Weicher maintained that the main problem with network news was simple incompetence. Editorial incompetence caused all three networks to omit the fact that voting was mandatory. Incompetent reporting failed to specify the flimsiness of evidence of arms shipments from Nicaragua. Finally, Dorfman interrupted. "Chris, do you really think it's only incompetence? There has to be something more. I think that's part of the problem, that one always considers these things with total innocence."

All right, an audience member, asked Dorfman later, what can we who work for the media do?

Dorfman smiled. "Well, to change the media, one would have to change the whole country," he said. "However, this is a very interesting country.... Many years ago [someone] said to Joseph McCarthy, 'Sir, is there no decency in you?' And that was the beginning of the end of McCarthy. So if we say to the media, 'Have you no decency?'...there are many wonderful people [working in the media] and maybe they will see what to do."

"We must depend on the American people to ask the media to be that responsible. Certainly, this forum is a good thing, just the fact that it can happen. In my country, it couldn't happen."

Rachel Kranz is a member of Critical Focus and of Columbia University's District 65/UAW Organizing Committee.



© Marcelo Montenegro

By Pat Aufderheide

If *Moscow on the Hudson* were any good, it might be seen as riding a wave of anti-Communist feeling. But the film may instead be swamped by it. If the movie says anything, it's that director Paul Mazursky has a great feel for small human moments that evoke sentiment and a disastrous sense of structure—the same clunker storytelling that reduced *Tempest* to a shambles.

In *Moscow*, Robin Williams plays Vladimir, a Russian circus musician who craves artistic freedom and defects in Bloomingdale's. Cuban-American ambulance-chasing lawyer (Alejandro Rey) quickly seizes on him, and a black security guard (Cleavant Derricks) befriends him. He industriously and naively makes his way in the real America of unemployment, exploited labor and junk food. He manages to dampen his aching loneliness for family and home culture through a love affair with a rambunctious Italian immigrant (Maria Conchita Alonso, once Miss Venezuela).

This is not newfangled anti-Communist agitprop so much as a highly-qualified testimonial to an America—let's be more specific, a gritty New York—where crime and grime, not political censors, limit individual aspiration. The more Vlad comes to know the U.S., the more he sees he has made a net, not a gross, gain in freedom. The gain, however, is real.

The opening scenes, full of ration lines, graft and corruption on the job in Russia, can hardly be taken as slander of the Soviet Union. All the details shown in the film are too well substantiated, not only by the director's own fact-finding mission to the USSR, but also by reports of such Russians as Constantin Simis in his book *USSR, the Corrupt Society*. Furthermore, Vlad loves his Russian roots and way of life, even with all its problems.

Mazursky isn't really interested in whether socialism, USSR-style, is a Good Thing or a Bad Thing. Russian life is merely a foil to allow him to expatiate on his long love affair with New York, which he sees as a rough-edged, open society, a cauldron of creativity. The problem is that in this movie, unlike his sweetly charming *Next Stop, Greenwich Village*, the New York we see is inauthentic to the core.

Next Stop had an episodic structure, too, but it was buoyed by the youthful idealism of its characters and its period authen-



Cleavant Derricks and Robin Williams make friends in Paul Mazursky's *MOSCOW ON THE HUDSON*.

Candide turns anti-Communist

ticity. Like *Fame*, it was an unabashed paean to the adolescent aspects of the American character. The streets and cafes of New York made a warm incubator for the creative spirit of its beatniks.

But Mazursky is still back on a Lower East Side stoop in the '50s, an eager and adolescent idealist. His view of the foreigners who staff the big city is friendly—even tender—but ignorant. The quickest tip-off is the hodge-podge of accents. None of these naturalized New Yorkers speaks with a consistent foreign accent, and Alonso's Hispanified caricature of Italian ought to raise an anti-defamation complaint.

All these foreigners are opaque, never more so than in the bathetic, pseudo-cathartic moment in which a United Nations' worth of new citizens takes the oath of allegiance to the U.S. The oath they take is, in fact, chilling, calling on them to renounce their past and distinctive ethnic loyalties. But the camera

that spirals around the swearing-in might just as well be erasing the contradictions and losses these people confront. The moment shows, among other things, that Mazursky can recognize the potential of a peak sentimental event, but that he can't build up to it in order to make it work.

As Mork and as Garp, Robin Williams has shown that he can create an otherworldly naif who makes us see the ironies in our own lives. Here he's been sabotaged by leaden lines and trapped inside a mechanical construct. Sometimes you feel sorry for him—for Williams, not for Vlad. Vlad is a Communist Candide, a permanently blank slate on which the trials of urban survival, East and West, are written. He's sweet, dumb, kind—and so what? Haplessness is not a quality around which anyone can create an engrossing character.

Mazursky presents himself as someone who can evoke the human comedy of modern life. But the scenes he sets up are no fun-

nier than the central character. Long lines for rationed goods in Russia aren't funny, even though Williams tries to flog some humor out of an extended joke about the ill-fitting shoes he buys. And the long lines at the U.S. immigration office aren't funny either, not even with a Cuban-American lawyer in the reception area. Maybe the problem is that Mazursky isn't really after comedy or even irony, but something else.

"Most Russians are just trying to survive," Mazursky said in press material explaining the film. "Yet all Russians who leave their country leave behind something they treasure and love. It's a terrible conflict for them, so the act of bravery is overwhelming. I had to say to myself, 'All that's great, but how do I make it funny?' I think the answer is not to get on a soapbox."

If Mazursky had gotten on the soapbox, we'd at least know what he wanted to say. As it is, the film mashes together senti-

mental observations on love, loyalty, patriotism, artistic freedom and garden-variety loneliness, with the only unifying theme being melting-pot happy talk.

The black "refugee from Alabama" in Harlem, the Cuban who floats to Miami on a raft only to be mistaken for a hotel employee on the beach, the Italian girl charming and primping her way to independence as a woman alone—what all these immigrants have in common is a lust for survival and the realization that the big city leaves it up to them. Sure, the city fosters creativity. It commands creativity of anyone who wants to stay alive there.

Mazursky is not retailing anti-Communism here, but pathos stuck together with cheap patriotism. In the end, the pathos lingers and the patriotism sours. The loneliness of Vlad, the long-distance defector, is easier to assuage than the wistfulness of Mazursky, the life-long New Yorker.

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FILM CLIPS

Grenada: The Future Coming Toward Us.

This openly partisan, hour-long documentary was completed only days before the U.S. invasion of Grenada. In a poignant prologue, Premiere Maurice Bishop explains to a New York audience (four months before his death) that, according to a secret document, the U.S. State Department found the tiny island a dangerous example to Americans because Grenadians speak English and 95 percent of them are black.

The documentary, made by a Grenadian (Samori Marksman), an American black (Carmen Ashhurst) and a veteran of the '60s left 16mm movement (John Douglas), backs up Bishop's claim. It addresses American leftists and minorities sympathetic to the revolution, in which Grenadians "took control of their lives" as the first revolu-

tionary people in the English-speaking Caribbean.

The style is unexceptional, with some graceful camera work revealing the physical beauty and the poverty of Grenada. As journalism it is resolutely one-sided, staying unswervingly with New Jewel Movement representatives, who discuss dramatic changes in health, education and work. With stills and narration the film also sketches Grenada's colonial history.

For the majority of white Americans who seem to accept the invasion as a regrettable necessity, this film may seem like propaganda. Thus the film does not bridge the ideological gap between a colonized society in transition and a society at once democratic and imperialist. However, neither does it attempt to.

Rather, it offers the perspective of those who built the three-year social experiment that the invasion ended. The film is in demand among political groups and on college campuses. For more information, contact Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, New York, NY 10019, (212) 246-5522.

In the Name of Democracy

Co-production, Communications: El Salvador and the Film Institute of El Salvador. In El Salvador, ballots and bullets go together, and they come from the same source. Americans and Salvadorans produced this half-hour documentary to make that point to Americans who equate the word "election" with democracy.

The tightly argued film has as

its centerpiece footage from the day of the 1982 election. It shows people lining up at 13 sites (for a city of 500,000) under military guard to vote on numbered, translucent ballots deposited in a lucite box in front of representatives of right-wing parties. A narrator explains that voting is mandatory, registered on all-important identification papers, without which people cannot get paychecks or ride buses. The narrator also reports, astonishingly, that even under this pressure 12 percent of the ballots were blank or voided.

The filmmakers use the day's events to illustrate the argument that the 1982 elections were staged for the benefit of the American people. Salvadoran government officials counted on their not being able to tell one kind of election from another. The reward was continued American aid. And it worked so

well they did it again in 1984. Scenes from the guerrilla-defended "control zones" and interviews with opposition sympathizers (such as Dr. Charlie Clements) and with a foreign journalist bolster the film's charge that the elections fit into a broader campaign of right-wing brutality.

The film has already received a positive reception among congressional aides. With a new introduction by Mike Farrell and an update, it will be broadcast on independent and cable stations in coming months. It is also available for community and Central American support groups, which ought to find it an excellent starting point for discussing the Reagan administration's Central American policy. Order from: Commu-Sal, 325 W. 38th St., 3rd floor, New York, NY 10018, (212) 947-9376.

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Blacks

Continued from page 2

ledged and unnoticed by the very people who have the greatest stake in wiping out all kinds of bigotry and the least stake in assuming a kind of double-standard morality.

Substituting Jews for Jacobites.

I had just completed reading *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number* by Jacobo Timmerman, when I explained to a friend how it had given me some fresh insights into the destructive effect of anti-Semitism on its victims. My friend, a black professional with an MBA degree, is a member of the American Muslim Mission (AMM) led by Warith Imam Deen Muhammad, the son and successor of the late Elijah Muhammad, founder and patriarch of the Nation of Islam. Imam W.D. Muhammad has transformed his father's organization from what was essentially a black nationalist cult (Elijah's version is presently being propagated by Farrakhan) into an orthodox Islamic body and has presumably extirpated all vestiges of the racism that was central to Elijah's doctrine.

"Is Timmerman a Jew?" my Muslim friend asked.

"Yes, he was a Jewish newspaper publisher in Argentina who..."

"Then I don't want to read it!" he

coldly interrupted. "I'm sick and tired of the Jacobite mentality taking over our minds. They've already got control of the media, the movies, television, academia and just about everything else. Why do I want to read something by that same mentality? Jacobites are against the moral growth of human society," explained this well-educated member of the AMM.

For followers of Imam Muhammad, Jacobites (a term derived from the biblical Jacob) are conspiracy-oriented people who seek to undermine God. Their goal, allege Muhammad's followers, is to fill man's mind with sacrilegious thoughts of hubris (a goal similarly ascribed to "secular humanists" by Moral Majority types). Many of Muhammad's followers believe these Jacobites to be all Jews. In all fairness to Imam Muhammad himself, I do not believe he has made this connection literal, but his allusions are sufficiently vague to allow some of his followers (many of whom previously believed that evil was personified by "white, blue-eyed devils") to substitute Jews for Jacobites.

Although African-Americans have been primary victims of the tragic human tendency to ascribe evil character to ethnicity, many blacks apparently see nothing wrong with stoking the embers of their own racist tendencies. For some reason, Jews make perfect scapegoats. When pressed to explain why they harbor anti-Jewish feelings, most black anti-Semites will offer vague accusations and religious superstitions. In his book,

Jacobo Timmerman does a better job.

"When the extreme right combats its natural enemies, its most hated object is the Jew.... Its natural enemy is the left, but its target of hatred is the Jew.

"Directed toward the Jew, hatred can attain novel dimensions, original forms and whimsical coloration," Timmerman wrote. "Hatred toward the Jew needs no system, discipline or methodology. All you need do is allow yourself to be carried along, all the hatred to drag you, overwhelm you, imprint itself upon you, arouse your imagination, your phobias, your areas of impotence and omnipotence, reticence and impunity.... Members of the extreme right can employ [hatred of Jews] in their relationship to the Jew without having to alter their final goal of fighting for a totalitarian society whose aim is extermination of the left and of democratic forms of life."

Timmerman's analysis rings a bell. It's a disheartening sound, but it echoes through much of my life's experience—especially my 15 or so years of involvement in the black liberation movement. Hate the Jew because...because they're all rich and they shamelessly exploit the black community; hate them because they'll "jew you down"; hate Jews because a black Moses taught them special secrets that they have misused; hate and watch them as they take conspiratorial control over the media and the cultural apparatus.

The old Nation of Islam preached that Jews were "special devils." The new

allegedly non-racist American Muslim Mission calls them "Jacobites." Jesse Jackson calls them "Hymie."

Salim Muwakkil is a Chicago-based journalist who writes regularly for *In These Times*.

Brazil

Continued from page 11

and they find that unpalatable. It was Brizola in the late '50s and early '60s who, as governor of Rio Grande do Sul, expropriated the telephone company and successfully organized resistance to a 1961 coup attempt.

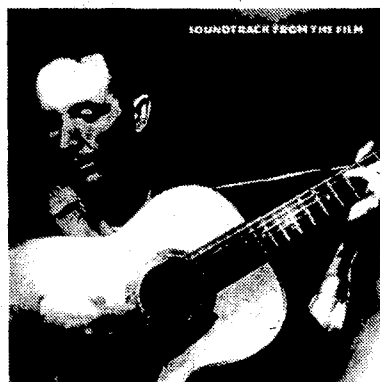
Brazil has a historic tradition of political reconciliation taking place among elites at some point prior to social convulsion; and so there seems a reasonable chance of a settlement. But tensions are running extremely high this time around, and the situation remains volatile.

As *In These Times* went to press, opposition leaders had scheduled a nationwide protest on May 13, the anniversary of the abolition of slavery. And Newton Cruz, with the state of emergency still technically in effect, continues his arbitrary rule of the Federal District, arresting peaceful demonstrators and detaining mainstream journalists.

Congress could still institute direct elections by attaching a rider to the Figueiredo amendment. But even if that strategy succeeds, there is no guarantee that the military, as one opposition congress member put it, "will take off their hats and go home."

Mitchell Torton is a New York-based journalist who writes regularly for *In These Times*.

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May 17

Michael Harrington, author and Co-Chair of DSA, will speak on "1984 and Beyond: If We Win, If Reagan Wins." 7:30 p.m. at Wellington Ave. Church, 615 W. Wellington. Comments by Bob Stark and Jenny Rohrer. \$2 donation requested. Reception will follow. Free childcare. For more information, call Jason at 871-7700.

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NYC Labor Film Club presents Bo Widerberg's *Adalen '31* about the 1931 Swedish General Strike. Discussion leader Stanley Aronowitz. 7:30 p.m., Local 1-S, 140 West 31st Street. Admission \$4. Tune in labor news on *Labor Report*, WBAI (99.5 FM), Wednesdays starting between 7-7:15 p.m.

El Salvador: The Union Response will be on Group W Cable Channel C-5/16, 10:30 p.m. and 5/24, 10 a.m. Also, Manhattan Cable Channel C-5/23, 8 p.m. and 5/24 10 a.m. For more information—(212) 766-1905.

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Belgium

Continued from page 9

Western Europe. "All the rest was fake," said Tobback.

He stressed that the German Social Democrats (SPD) have been the most loyal supporters of NATO because they saw it as "a protection against any new German militarism." Thus what is going on now is "almost an existential crisis" for some people in the SPD, he said.

The Belgian leader sees no point in striving for some sort of independent European defense. "The space is lacking" for such a thing as independent European security. "So our security is unquestionably linked organically to the global situation—call it detente—between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. We then have to defend ourselves the political way, using political and economic pressure on the two superpowers."

Thus, although it may look as though nothing is happening, an inner process of reassessment is underway in Belgium, at least among Flemish Socialists. Tobback would not try to predict when and how things will happen. "But one thing is clear," he said. "The missiles have already strongly undermined the belief in Western Europe as to the possibility of maintaining NATO for many years to come. I think they have opened the crisis within NATO."

Belgian Socialist expert Rik Coolsaet said that NATO "is really going on by inertia, by bureaucracy, by habit, by nothing else."

Both Tobback and Coolsaet promptly

dismissed the suggestion that Europeans might hold back from drawing conclusions about NATO for fear of losing a "restraining influence" on the U.S.

"We never had it," retorted Coolsaet. That is only the theory of some American liberals. We can't do it, we have never done it and the U.S. won't let us do it. It's as simple as that."

Video

Continued from page 24

do just the opposite: they distort original intentions and distance the artist even further from his audience. The authenticity of the medium of the phonograph record is removed, and with it, its authority as a work of art. The record's very presence in time and space is trivialized, its impact reduced to well-defined visual clues. The phonograph record, the object, its message reproduced in visual language, becomes detached from a domain of tradition, its function being only to complement the visual story.

Which is exactly what rock videos do best—complement the music—only we have been convinced by the industry that the reverse is true. On their own, videos have no significance (let's face it, you might as well watch *20-Minute Workout*, which effectively uses film techniques common to rock videos): it is *only* the song that gives the video its impact. Videos cannot interpret a recording, for they rely too heavily on the lyrical message of the song for their imagery, disregarding the sociological, political, cultural and even musical messages of the text. Further (and the rock audience needs to admit this fact to itself as soon as possi-

ble), rock artists rarely possess literary or dramatic talents, necessary skills when creating or acting in films. The appeal of an accomplished video performer like Michael Jackson is not that he can act but, as in the case of Elvis Presley and his movies, that we can view the development of a pop myth in the making.

One confusing factor is that we have come to believe that a video must showcase the artist in some of the most exciting videos (Bruce Springsteen's "Atlantic City," with shots of the New Jersey resort, and X's "Breathless," with scenes from the motion picture cut in rapid sequence) do not depict the artists at all. Some of the finest videos are even excerpts from narrative films (Michael Sembello's "Maniac," for instance). And what about Duran Duran? This bunch makes superb videos, but they are not rock artists by any stretch of the imagination—just film stars pretending to play music, the release of their records an incidental matter.

In themselves, then, rock videos are only the debris—like record covers, publicity stills, satin jackets, dolls, lunchboxes—that surround the event of a pop recording. They can either mask or reveal the recording, but they can never be substituted for it. The sad thing is that we have not accepted these artifacts for what they are.

The issue of rock videos is indeed complex, and fans and critics continue to espouse a love/hate attitude toward them. Frankly, I could not care less about them, and find them dull compared to rock documentaries, films about rock or with rock soundtracks, *Austin City Limits*, *Soul Train* and *Hee Haw*. Or maybe I am just looking for the kind of epiphany that occurred on Feb. 16, 1984, on NBC's

Buffalo Bill, the most intelligent sitcom currently in prime time: a reconciliation scene between Bill and Jo-Jo, enacted while Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers' "Why Do Fools Fall in Love" was allowed to play for its full length!

Bill (Dabney Coleman), the host of a talk show in Buffalo, and Jo-Jo (Joanna Cassidy), the director of the fictional program, are lovers on the series but have continuous spats due to Bill's sexual promiscuity. On this particular episode, the fight is more vicious than usual because Bill, forever obnoxious, has tried to pick up Jo-Jo's sister. It seems as if they will never make up.

And yet, near the end of the show, their eyes meet as a song comes over a radio in the television studio. The nonsense syllables of doo-wap fall upon their ears. Bill and Jo-Jo, both in their early 40s, slowly smile in recognition of a melody so wrapped up with their youth. They walk toward each other. "Why do birds sing so gay?" They embrace. "Why does the rain fall from up above?" The instrumental break approaches, the sax honking wildly, and the couple remembers high school proms and record hops, and so they dance. "Love is a losing game": it is the theme of their relationship on the weekly television program, and it defines the moment.

As the song continues to play itself out, we are drawn into the renewed love affair because we, too, recall lost moments when songs brought us closer to ones we loved. And as Bill and Jo-Jo dance their dreams, we understand that rock'n'roll and television have somehow magically met, not in video fakery but in the drama of memory.

This article first appeared in *City Paper of Washington, D.C.*

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HaCK Surrealism

By Robert A. Hull



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W

ERE TERRORISTS to take over the MTV [Music Television] transmitter, line the video jockeys up against the studio wall and shoot them, viewers would rightly wonder what new group was being promoted."—Greil Marcus, "Gulliver Speaks," *Artforum*, November 1983.

We have been hornswoggled by MTV, deceived by promotional rock videos. No longer can we distinguish between the product and its advertisement. The sound and image must now become one so that the record companies can milk what was

once thought of simply as "a song" for its complete market value. Songs are now concepts, starting-off points for capitalist ventures; the very souls of songs are squeezed for pennies.

We have all been duped—rock critics, industry types and toddlers alike. In particular, those usually reliable watchdogs, rock pundits, have been slow to act, either shrugging their shoulders at the phenomenon or preaching against MTV's overt acts of racism and sexism. I plan to do neither.

As heinous as they are in their disruption of the tradition of the phonograph record, rock videos have added another dimension to the television-viewing experience. Television packagers on the

West Coast are already devising new programs that will be built solely on the idea of integrating music into a narrative, directly copying the fluid, hack-surreal style of most rock videos. Since television, to steal Jean-Luc Godard's notion, exists only because of movies (that is, so that the public can view even more movies at a faster rate), the success of *The Big Chill* and *Flashdance* makes such plans seem highly possible as well as profitable.

Because rock videos are public dreams (or nightmares) about a song, their formlessness fits perfectly into the formless nature of television, the dream merchant. There is an inherent danger, however. Rock videos are not merely ongoing commercials awash in the sea of television—

they are also visions of what we should dream. For the consumer, they fabricate an extraordinary tale around the plain speech of a phonograph record. For example, the original meaning of Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean," an indictment of teenage pregnancy, has been lost, obliterated by a "stronger" meaning, one more visual and more apt to sell records. The overriding marketed dream now has a common audience and, therefore, no longer has any personal meaning for each of us. In fact, in its packaged visual form, "Billie Jean" may no longer even mean what Jackson originally intended.

Many argue that rock videos add another level of meaning to a song, but they

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